

# Topics in Transnational History: Comparative Wars

Tuesdays & Thursdays  
10:00am – 11:20am  
21:510:462  
HAH 322

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**Instructor:** Deborah Morrison-Santana

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**Office Hours:** appointments available upon request

## Course Description:

War has existed since the beginning of mankind, however the ways in which it is fought has evolved over time. Comparative Wars covers a variety of forms of war - from interstate to intrastate, covert to overt, regular to irregular. It distinguishes civil war from genocide and other war crimes. It demonstrates the international laws and standards of warfare that are in place as an attempt to control how wars are fought.

Focusing on wars from the 19th century to present, this course will aid in students' understanding of how and why war occurs. It will look into the antecedents, fighting, and aftermath of war from an historical perspective.

## Learning Goals:

Through class discussion, interaction with the instructor, and class presentations, students will practice their communication skills. The writing assignments aim to help students critically analyze course material, develop their own arguments, collect primary documents/evidence, and relate these historical materials to modern situations.

## Assignments:

- Participation – you are expected to regularly contribute to class discussions based on the readings, lectures, and your own research for your paper.
- In-class essays – there are two essay exams
- Reading journal – you are required to keep a log of your course readings (your analysis and thoughts on the readings each class – NOT a summary of the readings). This will be collected each class and should be typed and printed (1-2 pages per reading)
- Research Paper & Presentation – you will write a 10-12 page research paper on a war that we have not discussed in class. A rubric will be handed out midway through the semester. You will present your paper to the class at the end of the semester.

## Grading:

Attendance/Participation: 25%  
In-Class Essays: 30% (15% each)  
Reading Journal: 20%  
Student Presentation: 5%  
Final Research Paper: 20%

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100% TOTAL

## **COURSE POLICIES:**

- 1. Attendance** is mandatory for this course and will be taken each class. Missing classes without proper documentation (i.e. a doctor's note) will affect your participation grade. Any student who misses **eight** or more sessions through any **combination** of **excused** and **unexcused** absences will have missed more than a quarter of the class time and will not earn credit in this class. Such students should withdraw from the course to avoid an F. If you do miss a class, it is your responsibility to get notes from a fellow student on what you missed (do not email me asking what you missed). Excessive lateness will also affect your grade.
- 2. No personal technology devices allowed in class.** This means no cell phones, iPads, laptops, or any other kinds of electronic devices (unless needed for medical reasons, with the proper documentation). If you are caught using your phone or another device, you will lose participation credit for the day. Continuous use of these technologies will result in being asked to leave the classroom and lose participation credit for the day.
- 3. Academic Dishonesty:** Taking the words and ideas of another and presenting them as your own without proper use of citation constitutes plagiarism and it is considered grounds for receiving an "F" for the course and suspension/expulsion from the university. All students are required to uphold the honor code. Please see Rutgers' Academic Integrity Policy.
- 4.** Students should present official medical or legal documentation if they cannot fulfill any part of the course requirements. Exceptions will only be made under extraordinary circumstances such as serious illness and/or legal obligations.
- 5. Open Communication:** I am always available to help you succeed in this course. You may see me during my office hours or reach me through email. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns.
- 6. Your grade** is your responsibility and is non-negotiable. If you need a specific grade for your GPA, financial aid, academic standing, personal reasons, etc., you need to earn that grade by following the guidelines presented in this syllabus. Please do not contact me after the semester asking/begging for a better grade.
- 7.** All students are required to sign the **Rutgers Honor Code Pledge**. To receive credit, every assignment must have your signature under the following phrase: "On my honor, I have neither received nor given any unauthorized assistance on this assignment."

**Course Schedule (subject to change):**

	TOPIC	READING DUE
T 9/5	Introduction	
TH 9/7	War: Definitions & Origins	Clausewitz Ch. 1
T 9/12	Ethics of War	"The Ethics of Killing in War"
TH 9/14	American & French Revolutions	"Declaration of Independence" & "Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen"
T 9/19	Imperial Wars	"Was the Russo-Japanese War World War Zero?" and Herero NYT article
TH 9/21	The Great War (Antecedents & Fighting)	"The Live-and-Let-Live System of Trench Warfare" and <i>All Quiet on the Western Front</i> excerpt
T 9/26	Aftermath of WWI - Forging Peace	Treaty of Versailles
TH 9/28	Interwar Period	<i>The Hitler Myth</i> excerpt
T 10/3	<b>In-Class Essay #1</b>	
TH 10/5	World War II (Antecedents & Fighting)	USHMM Timeline
T 10/10	World War II - Psychological Warfare	Excerpt from <i>This Way to the Gas, Ladies and Gentlemen</i>
TH 10/12	The War in the Pacific & the Atomic Bomb	Harper's "Decision to Drop the Bomb"; <a href="https://www.theatlantic.com/photo/2016/05/hiroshima-before-and-after-the-atomic-bombing/482526/">https://www.theatlantic.com/photo/2016/05/hiroshima-before-and-after-the-atomic-bombing/482526/</a>
T 10/17	Aftermath of WWII & New International Laws	United Nations Genocide Convention; Geneva Convention Overview;
TH 10/19	The Cold War & the Threat of Nuclear War	"The Cold War and Its Aftermath"; "Cuban Missile Crisis"
T 10/24	Korean War	"The Impact of the Korean War on the Cold War"
TH 10/26	Guerilla Warfare & Vietnam	"The Politics of Asymmetric Conflict"
T 10/31	The Soviet Union in Afghanistan	"Afghanistan, the Graveyard of Empires"; and <i>International Studies</i> article
TH 11/2	<b>In-Class Essay #2</b>	
T 11/7	Iraq War #1 (1991)	"Operation Desert Storm"
TH 11/9	1990s Turmoil	"The War of Yugoslav Succession"
T 11/14	1990s Turmoil pt. 2	"Explaining the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda"
TH 11/16	9/11 & The War on Terror (al Qaeda)	"Authorization for the Use of Military Force in Response to 9/11 Attacks"
T 11/21	Iraq War #2 - (2003)	"From 'Shock and Awe' to 'Hearts and Minds'"
TH 11/23	<b>THANKSGIVING</b>	<b>*** NO CLASS ***</b>
T 11/28	The Ethics of Drone Warfare	"Drone Wars: Risks and Warnings"
TH 11/30	Arab Spring (2011)	"Arab Spring at Five"
T 12/5	The War on Terror pt. 2 (ISIS)	AUMF and ISIS
TH 12/7		STUDENT PRESENTATIONS
T 12/12	<b>LAST DAY OF CLASS</b>	STUDENT PRESENTATIONS