



**HIST 520.01W WORLD WAR II IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC  
COURSE SYLLABUS: FALL 2015**

Instructor: Dr. Cynthia Ross  
Assistant Professor  
Class Time: Online  
Office Location: Ferguson Social Sciences 104  
Office Hours: Every other Friday beginning September 11; Via email (better!)  
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**COURSE INFORMATION**

**Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Additional Readings:**

Theodore Cook and Haruko Taya Cook. *Japan at War: An Oral History*. The New Press. 1993. ISBN: 978-1565840393

Ronald Spector. *Eagle Against the Sun: The American War with Japan*. Vintage. 1985. ISBN: 978-0394741017

John Rabe. *The Good Man of Nanking: The Diaries of John Rabe*. Vintage. 2000. ISBN: 978-0375701979

James Bradley. *Flags of Our Fathers*. Bantam. 2006. ISBN: 978-0553380293

Kumiko Kakehashi. *So Sad to Fall in Battle: An Account of War Based on General Tadamachi Kurbayashi's Letters from Iwo Jima*. Presidio Press. 2007. ISBN: 978-0891419174

John Dower. *War Without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War*. Pantheon. 1987. ISBN: 978-0394751726

Donovan Webster. *The Burma Road: The Epic Story of the China-Burma-India Theater in World War II*. Harper Perennial. 2004. ISBN: 978-0060746384

E.B. Sledge. *With the Old Breed, at Peleliu and Okinawa*. Presidio Press. 2007. ISBN: 978-0891419068

Yoshida Mitsuru. *Requiem for Battleship Yamato*. Naval Institute Press. 1999. ISBN: 978-1557505446

Elizabeth Norman. *We Band of Angels: The Untold Story of the American Women Trapped on Bataan*. Random House, 2013. ISBN: 978-0812984842

Thurston Clarke. *Pearl Harbor Ghosts: The Legacy of December 7, 1941*. Ballantine Books. 2001. ISBN: 978-0345446077

William Manchester. *Goodbye Darkness. A Memoir of the Pacific War*. Back Bay Books. 2002. ISBN: 978-0316501118

Craig L. Symonds. *The Battle of Midway*. Oxford UP. 2011. ISBN: 978-0195397932

Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney. *Kamikaze Diaries: Reflections of Japanese Student Soldiers*. University of Chicago Press. 2007. ISBN: 978-0226619514

Toyofumi Ogura. *Letters from the End of the World: A Firsthand Account of the Bombing of Hiroshima*. Kodansha USA. 2001. ISBN: 978-4770027764

#### *A Note about the Course Texts:*

*Students are expected to acquire the course texts prior to the start of class. Failure to do so will hinder a student's ability to keep up with the course, and the Instructor is in no way responsible for such an eventuality. Allowances will not be made for students who lack possession of any course books.*

#### **Course Description:**

*"The art of war is of vital importance to the State. It is a matter of life and death, a road either to safety or to ruin. Hence it is a subject of inquiry which can on no account be neglected."*

-- Sun Tzu, The Art of War (@ 510 B.C.)

Frequently relegated to a secondary role in European-dominated perspectives on World War II, the Second World War in Asia and the Pacific has left a historical legacy that raises powerful, sometimes explosive questions concerning the causes, nature, and consequences of the war. Moreover, the continuing production of popular films (*Pearl Harbor*, *The Thin Red Line*, *Windtalkers*, *Flags of Our Fathers*, *Letters from Iwo Jima*, *John Rabe*) and television series (*The War*, *The Pacific*) on the topic testify to the ongoing power of the Pacific War in American, and international, popular culture and memory.

We begin by exploring the political, economic and cultural roots of Japanese imperialism in China in the 1930s before analyzing the course of the war between Japan and the western powers -- above all the United States -- from December 1941 onward. Major topics to be treated include: political, diplomatic, and military strategy; the experience of combat; the role of race in determining the ideology and conduct of the war; the social, cultural and material impact of the war in Japan and occupied-Asia; and the dropping of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Finally, we will explore the controversies surrounding the memory and the legacy of the war in Japan, Asia and the United States.

The course will rely heavily on readings from a variety of genres to provide both micro- and macro-level perspectives on the complexity of the war experience. We will use first-hand accounts from diverse sources – a Nazi party member turned rescuer in the midst of mass murder in China; participants and witnesses from Pearl Harbor; United States and Japanese soldiers; kamikaze pilots; and victims of the atomic bombing at Hiroshima – to try and make sense of this “war without mercy,” at once familiar and scarcely recognizable, at an immediate, personal level. Additional resources and popular filmic representations of the war will add to our perspective. We will further undertake case-studies of three iconic events of the war – the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, the Battle of Iwo Jima, and the dropping of the first atomic bomb at Hiroshima – and explore why they have assumed mythical stature in their respective societies, both at the time they occurred and in popular memory, and to what effect. When it is all over, we will not have solved the history of World War II in Asia and the Pacific – if all goes well, we should have many more questions than when we began. We should, however, have a much richer sense of the lasting lessons, legacies, and challenges generated by this epic event.

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

Develop a complex and critical understanding of the historical causes, methods, experiences, and consequences of World War II in Asia and the Pacific.

Integrate military, political, and cultural factors in coming to a comprehensive understanding of the purposes, conduct, and effects of the war.

<b>COURSE REQUIREMENTS</b>
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**Instructional / Methods / Activities Assessments:**

The reading assignments and class sessions are listed for each week. I expect you to complete your readings on schedule. You will submit all written assignments electronically through eCollege so be sure to familiarize yourself with the application before any assignments are due. To access this course, go to [MyLeo](#), login, click eCollege on the right side of the screen, then click My Courses on the left side of the next screen and look for this course.

**Assignments:**

*See eCollege for assignment instructions*

Weekly reading summaries and questions (15 @ 20 each)	300 points
Two book/journal reviews (100 each)	300 points
Peer review of cohort submissions (50 each)	100 points
Semester Project (briefs 10 each)	300 points
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>1000 points</b>

Semester Grades: A: 100-90%; B: 89-80%; C: 79-70%; D: 69-60%; F: 59% and below.

The general grading criteria for all written assignments in this class is based on the following:

A = Mastery of content and reading material; factual accuracy; thoughtful interpretation or argument that synthesizes original thoughts and ideas with content; technically clean

B = Good-to-excellent command of the majority of content and reading material; competent factual accuracy; a generally solid historical argument backed with adequate evidence

C = Fair command of content material; reasonable factual accuracy; ability to articulate a specific thesis or argument even if it is not original or is poorly supported by the evidence

D = Poor command of content; factual errors; no real argument driving the essay

F = Even worse than above; completely off topic; no work submission

## **TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS**

The following information has been provided to assist you in preparing to use technology successfully in this course.

- Internet access/connection – high speed required (not dial-up)
- Word Processor (i.e. MS Word)

Additionally, the following hardware and software are necessary to use eCollege:

Our campus is optimized to work in a Microsoft Windows environment. This means our courses work best if you are using a Windows operating system (XP or newer) and a recent version of Microsoft Internet Explorer (6.0, 7.0, or 8.0).

Your courses will also work with Macintosh OS X along with a recent version of Safari 2.0 or better. Along with Internet Explorer and Safari, eCollege also supports the Firefox browser (3.0) on both Windows and Mac operating systems. Students using Google Chrome report consistent errors and failure to load.

It is strongly recommended that you perform a “Browser Test” prior to the start of your course. To launch a browser test, login in to eCollege, click on the ‘myCourses’ tab, and then select the “Browser Test” link under Support Services.

## **ACCESS AND NAVIGATION**

This course will be delivered using eCollege, the Learning Management System used by Texas A&M University-Commerce. To get started with the course, go to:  
<https://leo.tamuc.edu/login.aspx>.

You will need your CWID and password to log in to the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact Technology Services at 903.468.6000 or [helpdesk@tamuc.edu](mailto:helpdesk@tamuc.edu).

## **COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT**

**Interaction with Instructor Statement:**

Students should make use of the Instructor's office hours or use the email function in eCollege to email the Instructor. Students must provide a valid return email address for replies. Unless otherwise announced, students can expect replies within 24 hours.

### **eCollege Student Technical Support:**

Texas A&M University-Commerce provides students technical support in the use of eCollege. The student help desk may be reached by the following means 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

**Chat Support:** Click on '*Live Support*' on the tool bar within your course to chat with an eCollege Representative.

**Phone:** 1-866-656-5511 (Toll Free) to speak with eCollege Technical Support Representative.

**Email:** [helpdesk@online.tamuc.org](mailto:helpdesk@online.tamuc.org) to initiate a support request with eCollege Technical Support Representative.

**Help:** Click on the '*Help*' button on the toolbar for information regarding working with eCollege (i.e. How to submit to dropbox, How to post to discussions etc...)

<b>COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES</b>
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### **Citation Style:**

Chicago (15<sup>th</sup> or 16<sup>th</sup> edition) or Turabian; footnotes with bibliography.

### **Late Assignments:**

Ample time is given for the completion of all assignments and there are no 'surprise' due dates. Any work submitted past the due date will receive 1 letter grade deduction per day. For example, a discussion post due on Friday but not submitted until Sunday can only receive a maximum letter grade of C.

### **Extra Credit:**

There is no extra credit in this course.

### **Class Conduct:**

I will treat you with respect and I expect the same in return. Please exercise common classroom courtesy as if you were in a traditional classroom setting.

### **Plagiarism:**

Plagiarism is taking someone else's work and passing it off as your own words, thoughts, or ideas. This includes, but is not limited to, using direct quotes out of a book or from the internet as your own words, properly using quotation marks but noting the wrong person as the author, purchasing a paper or exam from friends or strangers, using material from the internet verbatim as your own words, and cutting and pasting entire papers or internet pages and passing it off as

your own work. Cheating on any assignment or allowing others to copy your work is another form of academic dishonesty.

It is fine to use other people's words and ideas as long as they receive credit in citations. If you are unsure about the precise definition of plagiarism and/or think you may have committed this form of academic dishonesty, see the instructor or visit the Online Writing Lab before you turn in the assignment.

I have absolutely no tolerance for plagiarism! If a student commits academic dishonesty on any part of an assignment, the assignment will receive a zero with no possibility for make-up. If academic dishonesty is committed a second time, the student will immediately fail the course and I will pursue the maximum university discipline possible. *This is not negotiable.*

### **Writing Lab:**

The TAMU-Commerce Online Writing Lab is a valuable service free to any student. They can help you get started on a paper, help with drafts, and answer specific questions about citation style, grammar, and spelling. While they will not write the paper for you, they are there to give feedback and guidance.

### **University Specific Procedures:**

#### ***ADA Statement***

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

#### **Office of Student Disability Resources and Services**

**Texas A&M University-Commerce**

**Gee Library 132**

**Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835**

**Fax (903) 468-8148**

[StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu](mailto:StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu)

Student Disability Resources & Services

#### ***Student Conduct***

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See *Code of Student Conduct from Student Guide Handbook*).

<b>COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR</b>
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*I reserve the right to modify the class schedule and readings if necessary but will give students ample notice on eCollege. All assignments are due Sunday @ 11:59pm unless otherwise noted.*

See eCollege for the most current information on topics, readings, and assignments.

### Week 1

Introductions and understanding the Pacific War from a world history perspective

What is world history? - WHA

What is world history? Letter to the editor AHA

Comparing Global History to World History Mazlish

An Emerging Consensus about World History? McNeill

#### Topics:

Imperialism, Nationalism, and the Context for War in Asia & the Pacific

The Impact of Western Imperialism

19<sup>th</sup> century imperialism in Asia

China and Japan: Contrasting responses to the West

#### Read:

Ronald Spector. Eagle Against the Sun: The American War with Japan. INTRODUCTION, PRELUDE, CHAPTERS 1 AND 2

Theodore Cook and Haruko Taya Cook. Japan at War: An Oral History. INTRODUCTION

Assignment: Weekly reading summary and questions

### Week 2

#### Topics:

Imperialism, Nationalism, and the Context for War in Asia & the Pacific, cont'd

Japanese Imperialism vs. Chinese Nationalism

Japan's rise as an imperial power, 1894-1918

The Collapse of Imperial China

Nationalism and Communism in China

#### Read:

Theodore Cook and Haruko Taya Cook. Japan at War: An Oral History. CHAPTER 1

Ronald Spector. Eagle Against the Sun: The American War with Japan. CHAPTER 3

John Dower. War Without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War. PREFACE, CHAPTERS 1 AND 2

Assignment: Weekly reading summary and questions

Book review selection due

### Week 3

#### Topics:

Imperialism, Nationalism, and the Context for War in Asia & the Pacific, cont'd

The War in China: Japan's Bid for Asian Hegemony

The Resurgence of Japanese Militarism

The War: From "Quick Fix" to "Quagmire"

## War Crimes: “The Rape of Nanjing”

### Read:

Theodore Cook and Haruko Taya Cook. Japan at War: An Oral History. CHAPTER 2  
Ronald Spector. Eagle Against the Sun: The American War with Japan. CHAPTER 4  
John Dower. War Without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War. CHAPTER 3

Assignment: Weekly reading summary and questions  
Brief report on semester project status

### Week 4

#### Topics:

War Between Japan and the West: Motivations, Preparations, and Early Japanese Success  
Iconic Myth #1:

The Attack on Pearl Harbor: Events, Outcomes, Legacies

The U.S.-Japanese Diplomatic Crisis

American and Japanese Strategic Planning

Planning for Pearl Harbor:

The Japanese plan: motives, assumptions, goals

American preparations – conspiracy or incompetence?

### Read:

Ronald Spector. Eagle Against the Sun: The American War with Japan. CHAPTER 5 AND 6  
Theodore Cook and Haruko Taya Cook. Japan at War: An Oral History. CHAPTER 3  
Thurston Clarke. Pearl Harbor Ghosts: The Legacy of December 7, 1941. ALL  
William Manchester. Goodbye Darkness. A Memoir of the Pacific War. PREAMBLE,  
PROLOGUE, ABLE, BAKER

Assignment: Weekly reading summary and questions

### Week 5

#### Topics:

Japan Ascendant: December 1941 to June 1942

The Philippines

Malaya, Singapore, the Dutch East Indies

The Forgotten War: China-Burma-India

### Read:

Ronald Spector. Eagle Against the Sun: The American War with Japan. CHAPTER 7  
Theodore Cook and Haruko Taya Cook. Japan at War: An Oral History. CHAPTER 5  
William Manchester. Goodbye Darkness. A Memoir of the Pacific War. CHARLIE, DOG  
Donovan Webster. The Burma Road: The Epic Story of the China-Burma-India Theater in World  
War II. ALL

Assignment: Weekly reading summary and questions  
Book review due



## Week 6

### Topics:

The Pacific War: Naval and Island Battles, 1942-45

Turning Point: The Battle of Midway

### Read:

Ronald Spector. Eagle Against the Sun: The American War with Japan. CHAPTER 8

Craig L. Symonds. The Battle of Midway. ALL

Assignment: Weekly reading summary and questions

Brief report on semester project status

## Week 7

### Topics:

America on the Offensive: The Island War (I)

Strategies: American and Japanese

Tactics: Island landings, air and naval battles

Selected Battles: Guadalcanal, New Guinea, Tarawa, Saipan

### Read:

Ronald Spector. Eagle Against the Sun: The American War with Japan. CHAPTER 9

THROUGH 20

Theodore Cook and Haruko Taya Cook. Japan at War: An Oral History. CHAPTER 13 AND 14

William Manchester. Goodbye Darkness. A Memoir of the Pacific War. EASY, FOX, GEORGE, HOW

Assignment: Weekly reading summary and questions

Peer review due

## Week 8

### Topics:

The Island War (II): At the Gateway to Japan:

Case Study – The Battle of Okinawa

### Read:

Ronald Spector. Eagle Against the Sun: The American War with Japan. CHAPTER 21 AND 22

William Manchester. Goodbye Darkness. A Memoir of the Pacific War. ITEM AND JIG

E.B. Sledge. With the Old Breed, at Peleliu and Okinawa. ALL

Yoshida Mitsuru. Requiem for Battleship Yamato. ALL

Assignment: Weekly reading summary and questions

## Week 9

### Topics:

Iconic Myth #2: The Battle of Iwo Jima

Icons and Myths: The Flags of Iwo Jima

Read:

James Bradley. *Flags of Our Fathers*. ALL

Recommended Film: *Flags of Our Fathers*

Assignment:

Weekly reading summary and questions

Brief report on semester project status

Week 10

Topics:

Iwo Jima: The Japanese Perspective

Read:

Kumiko Kakehashi. *So Sad to Fall in Battle: An Account of War Based on General Tadamachi Kurbayashi's Letters from Iwo Jima*. ALL

Recommended Film: *Letters from Iwo Jima*

Assignment: Weekly reading summary and questions

Week 11

Topics:

Race, Empire, and Occupation in the US and Asia

Backlash from Pearl Harbor: Japanese Internment in the United States

Read:

Article Selection on Japanese Internment TBA

John Dower. *War Without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War*. CHAPTER 4 TO END

Elizabeth Norman. *We Band of Angels: The Untold Story of the American Women Trapped on Bataan*. ALL

Assignment: Weekly reading summary and questions

Book review due

Week 12

Topics:

The Ideology and Practice of Empire: Japanese-Occupied Asia

"The Greater East-Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere"

Occupation, Collaboration and Resistance in Asia

Read:

Theodore Cook and Haruko Taya Cook. *Japan at War: An Oral History*. CHAPTER 4 AND 6

John Rabe. *The Good Man of Nanking: The Diaries of John Rabe*. ALL

Recommended Film: John Rabe (2010)

Assignment: Weekly reading summary and questions  
Peer review due  
Brief report on semester project status

## THANKSGIVING WEEK

Week 13

Topics:

Firebombing and Cherry Blossoms: Total War Comes to Japan  
Attrition, Terror, and Sacrifice  
Militarism, indoctrination and social control  
Mobilization for total war  
Firebombing  
The Kamikaze: The Poetry of Death

Read:

Theodore Cook and Haruko Taya Cook. Japan at War: An Oral History. CHAPTER 7-12, 15-18  
Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney. Kamikaze Diaries: Reflections of Japanese Student Soldiers. ALL

Assignment: Weekly reading summary and questions  
Any final questions/concerns on semester project

Week 14

Topics:

Iconic Myth #3: The Atomic Bombs:  
Explanations, Controversies, and Effects

Read:

Ronald Spector. Eagle Against the Sun: The American War with Japan. CHAPTER 23  
Theodore Cook and Haruko Taya Cook. Japan at War: An Oral History. CHAPTER 19  
Toyofumi Ogura. Letters from the End of the World: A Firsthand Account of the Bombing of Hiroshima. ALL

Assignment: Weekly reading summary and questions  
Semester project due

Week 15

Topics:

Conclusion: War Memories and Legacies  
Conflicting Memories, Mixed Legacies

Read:

Articles TBA

Theodore Cook and Haruko Taya Cook. Japan at War: An Oral History. CHAPTER 20-24

Assignment: Wrap Up and final thoughts