Course Syllabus

Department: Social Science

Date: 11/30/15

I. Course Prefix and Number: HIS 261

Course Name: War and Society in the Age of Total War: World Wars I and II

Credit Hours and Contact Hours: 3 credit hours and 3 contact hours

Catalog Description including pre- and co-requisites:

This course focuses on the age of total war, 1900-1945, from the outbreak of history’s first modern, industrial struggle (WWI), through the even costlier Second World War and the birth of the atomic age. Of particular interest will be the crucial interaction between war and society: how societies give form and substance to modern conflict and how wars, in turn, spark dramatic social, political and economic change.

Prerequisite: Placement into ENG 101 or successful completion of ENG 090 or ENG 095 with a grade of C- or better.

Relationship to Academic Programs and Curriculum including SUNY Gen Ed designation if applicable:

May be taken to fulfill the 3-Credit SUNY General Education requirement for the Western Civilization Knowledge and Skills Area or the Other World Civilizations Knowledge and Skills Area, and for most degrees this course can be taken to fulfill a Social Science elective, a Liberal Arts elective or a General Elective requirement.

II. Course Student Learning Outcomes:

Students will:

- Demonstrate knowledge of the basic narrative of the military, political, economic, social, and technological history of WWI, WWII, and the decisive role these conflicts have played in shaping western and world history.

- Demonstrate an understanding of the manifold ways that society (class, gender, political and ideological paradigms, economic conditions, culture, and religious values) has helped to determine the nature, form, and outcome of the major conflicts of the 1900-1945 period.
• Demonstrate an understanding of how the total conflicts of the first half of the twentieth century impacted upon the societies waging them (ex. altering class and gender roles, transforming cultural mores, changing political relationships etc.).

• Demonstrate an understanding of the myriad causes of modern conflict, such as unrealized national objectives, economic advantage, national suspicions or rivalries, imperialism, clashing ideologies etc.

• Demonstrate an understanding of the global scope and implications of WWI, WWII.

• Demonstrate an understanding of the manifold ways rapidly-changing technologies have conditioned wartime objectives and modes of conflict.

• Demonstrate the ability to comprehend, interpret, analyze and evaluate college-level primary and secondary source readings in the field of modern military history.

• Identify, analyze and evaluate arguments made by some of the major authors in the field of modern military history, and, in their own writing, demonstrate well-reasoned and evidence-supported arguments when interpreting historical subject matter.

• Demonstrate the ability to identify, locate, evaluate, use and share information from a range of published/printed and electronic historical resources.

College Learning Outcomes Addressed by the Course:

| X writing | X computer literacy |
|☐ oral communications | ☐ ethics/values |
|X reading | ☐ citizenship |
|☐ mathematics | X global concerns |
|X critical thinking | X information resources |

III. Assessment Measures (Summarize how the college and student learning outcomes will be assessed):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>List identified College Learning Outcomes(s)</th>
<th>Specific assessment measure(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking Writing</td>
<td>• Student knowledge of the basic narrative of the history of WWI and WWII, and the decisive role these conflicts have played in shaping western and world history will be assessed using quizzes, written</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2
assignments and/or essay examinations.

- Student knowledge of the war and society nexus, the various causes of modern conflict and the influence of evolving technologies will be assessed using quizzes, written assignments and/or essay examinations.

- An assigned research paper will be employed to assess students’ ability to identify, analyze and evaluate arguments made by some of the major authors in the field of modern military history. In their paper, students will demonstrate well-reasoned and evidence-supported arguments when interpreting historical subject matter.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Quizzes and/or essay examinations will be employed to assess students' ability to comprehend, interpret, analyze and evaluate primary and secondary source readings in the field of modern military history.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Global Concerns</td>
<td>Quizzes and/or essay examinations will be employed to assess students' understanding of the global scope and implications of WWI and WWII.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Resources</td>
<td>An assigned, computer-generated paper (critical book review or research paper) will be employed to assess students' ability to gather information from a range of published/printed and electronic historical sources.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**IV. Instructional Materials and Methods**

**Types of Course Materials:**

Textbook, published primary source reader (or electronic equivalent), assigned historical
monograph(s), College learning management system, web-based historical material.

Methods of Instruction:
Lecture, reading and discussion

V. General Outline of Topics Covered:
Modern Military History: Methods, Sources, Research, Analysis and Interpretation
Origins and Causes of the First World War
WWI: History’s First Total, Global, Industrial and Technological Conflict
Verdun, the Somme and the Western Front, 1914-1918
Total War on the Home Front
The Eastern Front and Peripheral Theaters (Africa, Middle East, Pacific), 1914-1918
U.S. Enters the Great War, 1917-18
The Flawed Paris Peace Conference and the Bolshevik Revolution, 1918-1919
Cooperation and Conflict in the Interwar Era
The Great Depression, the Rise of Fascism and Stalinist Russia
Inside Hitler’s Germany
Origins of WWII in Europe and the Far East, 1931-39
War in Europe, 1939-45
War in the Air and on the High Seas, 1939-45
America in WWII, 1941-45
Wartime Diplomacy, from Atlantic Charter to Potsdam, 1941-45
War in the Pacific and Far East, 1941-45
Total War in the Home Front
Hiroshima, Nagasaki and the Birth of the Atomic Age, 1945

Origins of the Cold War