

INTA 3012/8803SG

War in the Twentieth Century (W20C)

Regents Professor Seymour E. Goodman, 302 Habersham, 5-1461,
seymour.goodman@inta.gatech.edu, [available before or after class or by appointment \(easily made\)](#)

Spring 2019, TuTh, 12:00-1:15, CoC 53, January 8 – April 23 + final, 2019

Syllabus (This syllabus is current as of March 19, 2019)

W20C provides a historical foundation and understanding of the causes, conduct and consequences of modern war and aims to support informed discussion and analysis of contemporary crisis and conflict.

In a bit more detail, the primary storyline for this course:

At the beginning of the 20th Century, there were arguably nine (9) Great Powers who had largely divided up the rest of the world among themselves, most often in the form of colonies or territories. The military-technological gaps across the Great Powers were fairly small.

At the beginning of the 21st Century, there was one Superpower. The colonies and territories for the most part had become over 100 independent countries. The military-technological lead of the one Superpower was huge, dwarfing the next few most advanced countries.

Much of this change was the result of three major wars (World War I, World War II and the Cold War), and a large number of lesser wars, during the 20th Century.

How did this come about?

The one Superpower has now been mired in three wars for most of the young 21st Century. Each has lasted longer than any of its wars of the 20th Century. The military-technological and several other gaps between the Superpower and its enemies are greater than has been the case at any time in its nearly 250 year history. Why doesn't the Superpower win any of these wars?

Learning objectives:

To become knowledgeable about the why, when, what, where, and how of the three most extensive and dominating (and some of the many lesser) wars of the 20th Century. The three are World War I, World War II, and the Cold War (including the Soviet-American military-industrial conflict, and the wars in Korea and Vietnam). How did they attain their global scales?

To understand each war from the perspective of those that came before and the influence each would have on those that followed.

To develop a deeper understanding of how the three big and many lesser wars of the 20th Century resulted in the entire world as we have it today.

To determine if “macro-patterns” for success or failure in armed conflict appear and disappear over the course of the 20th Century. Have the perceptions of what makes for success and failure changed?

To identify the dominant and emerging technologies of each period. To understand the roles of these technologies in determining the conduct and outcomes of the wars of the period.

Readings:

Martin van Creveld, *The Changing Face of War: Lessons of Combat from the Marne to Iraq*. NY: Ballantine, 2006.

Geoffrey Parker (ed.), *Warfare, The Triumph of the West*, Cambridge University Press, 1995. Chapters 13-17, epilogue.

Byron Farwell, *Over There: The United States in the Great War, 1917-18*, NY: Norton, 1999.

Paul Kennedy, *Engineers of Victory: The Problem Solvers Who Turned the Tide in the Second World War*. NY: Random House, 2013.

Ken Burns and Lynn Novik, *The Vietnam War*, multi-part video documentary available from multiple sources, 2017.

A copy of each book will be placed on library reserve.

Assignments of Chapter x in these books will be designated VCx, Px, Fx, and Kx respectively. Episodes in the Burns and Novik documentary will be denoted BNx.

Grades (3012):

15% Class participation, including weekly attendance, and reading verification.

20% Student projects.

65% Two exams for 30% and 35% each. The last will be the final exam.

Additional requirements for the INTA8803 students will be worked out individually.

Depending on class size, we will compress much of the post-1950 armed conflict into the student projects, e.g. the late 1940s, Cuban missile crisis, Berlin x3, India-Pakistan-China wars, Middle East wars, post-1945 weapons technologies, etc. With some variations, each will consist of a 15-20 minute in-class presentation, a 4 page summary, Q&A, and annotated bibliography.

Some broader Georgia Tech context reminders:

We operate under an honor system that we take seriously. In particular, you should explicitly cite your sources.

We also operate under the Georgia Tech and Ivan Allen College's Commitment to a Diverse Community. (See iac.gatech.edu)

Schedule:

After the first week, each reading assignment should be completed by the day listed.

Week 1:

Jan 8-10 Overview of the class and syllabus. Some definitions and concepts.
Wars at the turn of the century, 1871-1913. The Great Powers, their wars for colonies and territories. The world as it developed by 1913.

VCIntro, VC1
Biosketch assignment.

Week 2:

Jan 15 Prelude to World War, 1871-1913

VC1

Jan 17 World War I

P13, Biosketches due.

Week 3:

Jan 22-24 World War I, 1914-17

P14, VC2, F1-F2

Week 4:

Jan 29-31 World War I, 1917-18 (1/29 cc)

F3-20

Week 5:

- Feb 5 The Great War
 F21-27
- Feb 7 The “end” of the Great War
 P15

Week 6:

- Feb 12 The Twenty Years’ “Truce”, new nations
- Feb 14 The Twenty Years’ “Truce,” technological evolutions
 vC3

Week 7:

- Feb 19 Midterm exam
- Feb 21 WWII 1939-41, discussion of projects
 P15, KIntro

Week 8:

- Feb 26 World War II, 1941, discussion of projects
- Feb 28 How to Get Convoys Safely Across the Atlantic
 P16, K1

Week 9:

- Mar 5 How to Win Command of the Air: Europe and the Pacific
 K2, VC4
- Mar 7 How to Stop a Blitzkrieg
 K3

Week 10:

- Mar 12 How to Seize an Enemy-held Shore
 K4
- Mar 14 How to Defeat the “Tyranny of Distance”
 K5

Week 11:

Week of March 18 is Spring Break

Week 12:

Mar 26 The end of WWII. The atomic bomb. Nation-State transformations.
K5, KConcl, VC5

Mar 28 Nation-State transformations. Wars of Independence.
Formation of the UN, NATO, Warsaw Pact
The Korean War (Matt York)

Week 13:

April 2 Chinese Militarization (Lanier Freeman, Lukas Hassler)
Cuba in the Cold War (Kevin Byrne)

April 4 *70 years of NATO, 2:30-4 pm, Academy of Medicine
P17, B&N1-3

Week 14:

April 9 The Vietnam War (William Bozarth)

April 11 Conflicts Involving the Soviet Union
(Heyward Smith, Carlton Winstead)
Finish all B&N episodes

Week 15:

April 15 *Operation OVERLORD, 11-1:30 pm, Peachtree Room, SC

April 16 Arab-Israeli Wars (Elle Hamm, Sara Schmitt)
Iran-Iraq War (Eric Richter, Eitan Ghelman)
First Gulf War (Jarod Lafalce, Rohan Malik)
VC6

April 18 The Rise of the Helicopter (Andrew Barnhart, Joshua Thompson)
Jet Aircraft and Cruise Missiles (Brandon Cruz)
The Space Race Between the US and USSR
(Matt Schmitz, Will Whitlow)

Week 16:

- April 23 The Balkan Wars (Yuri Horstmann, Jeramie Mercado)
- The Cost of US Defense at the End of the 20th Century (Justin Bose, Caleb Henderson)
- War in the 21st Century.
 Lessons learned or not learned from the 20th Century.
- VC7, Epilogues in Parker and Van Creveld books
- May 2 Final exam, 11:20 for 2 hrs

* Denotes symposiums at times other than our normally scheduled classes, and requires RSVP. See the announcements sent to all members of this class.