

HTS 3823-RNZ: WORLD WAR II IN THE PACIFIC

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Spring Semester 2007

Pacific Study Abroad Program
Australia Segment
February 19-March 29, 2007

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The Second World War represents a key historical dividing line in the twentieth century. It would alter the world balance of power and fundamentally re-structure patterns of pre-war colonialism. This truly global conflict touched the lives of millions who were drawn into its two main theatres of operation -- the Atlantic and the Pacific. This course will focus on the history of United States policies and military operations in the Pacific theatre. The first part of our investigation will explore the diplomatic history of the period leading up to the war, emphasizing the rise of Japanese militarism; the emergence of the Axis Alliance among Japan, Germany, and Italy; United States-Japanese relations; the U.S. domestic struggle between isolationism and internationalism; and the events leading up to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1945. We will then turn to the military, strategic, and political aspects of the war in the Pacific. Topics will include the United States "Europe First" strategy in early 1942; policy debates surrounding the evolution of the U.S. Navy's "island-hopping" operations; the impact of the war on various Pacific communities, including Australia and New Zealand; the invasion of the Japanese home islands; and the naval, land, and air war against Japan, culminating in the United States decision to use atomic weapons at Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August, 1945.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

For the first three weeks of our course we will be located in Sydney in the state of New South Wales. During our stay, there will be a class field trip to the Australian National Maritime Museum, and students will be encouraged to attend the Australian Museum and the Museum of Sydney on their own as part of their immersion in Australian society. The last three weeks will be located in the modern city of Brisbane, in the state of Queensland. While in Brisbane we will take a class field trip to the Queensland Museum while students will be encouraged to visit other attractions such as the Queensland Maritime Museum

Reading assignments are listed on the syllabus and students are responsible for keeping up with this material. Final grades will be determined by a mid-term exam taken at the end of the Sydney segment of the program (30%); a final exam administered at the conclusion of the Brisbane segment (30%); a research essay submitted during the last week of the program in Brisbane (30%); and a grade for class participation and discussion (10%). The essay will be on a topic chosen by the student and approved by the instructor. Based on internet research and what additional library resources are available to augment student ideas, it will be of 7-10 pages in length (typed double-spaced), and must include a bibliography of sources used.

The class will meet four times a week, Monday through Thursday for a total of ninety minutes each day. Because we are compressing the information normally taught over the course of a semester into a six week session, class attendance is a key component to developing a full

understanding of the material. Therefore the following attendance policy will be in effect: students are allowed one unexcused absence for the duration of the course. For each additional unexcused absence, students will have five percentage points deducted from their final grade

GEORGIA TECH HONOR CODE:

Although we will be in Australia, all policies contained in the Student Code of Conduct will apply just as if we were on campus in Atlanta. Students in this class will be expected to abide by the honor code and avoid any instances of academic misconduct including but not limited to: 1) possessing, using, or exchanging improperly acquired written or oral information in the preparation of an exam or paper; 2) substitution of material that is wholly or substantially identical to that created or published by another individual or individuals; 3) false claims of performance or work that has been submitted by the student. See published Honor Code for additional information (the full text of the code, the history of its development and implementation, and other related information may be found on the web at <http://www.honor.gatech.edu/>).

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Robert Dallek, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy, 1932-1945* (with a new afterword); Oxford University Press, Paperback, 1995 (ISBN# 0-19-509732-7)

Ronald H. Spector, *Eagle Against the Sun: The American War with Japan*; Vintage Books, Paperback, 1985 (ISBN #0-394-74101)

Additional shorter readings will be placed on library reserve to be accessed electronically either before or after departure in January. They will be included in an updated version of the syllabus.

CLASS CALENDAR AND ASSIGNMENTS:

Week 1: February 19-22 (Sydney)

I. United States foreign policy in the 1930s

- A. The history of United States Pacific policy: an overview
- B. Franklin Roosevelt: nationalist, internationalist, or isolationist?
- C. Japanese aggression in Manchuria and the China mainland
- D. Japan, oil, and the struggle for resources

Reading: Dallek, chapters 1-7

Week 2: February 26-March 1

II. The coming of United States war in the Pacific

- A. The politics of American neutrality and the Axis Alliance
- B. The Road to Pearl Harbor
- C. The Pearl Harbor debate: the revisionists and their critics
- D. Japan and the "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere"

Reading: Dallek, chapters 8-11; Spector, chapters 1-5

Week 3: March 5-8

III. The War in the Pacific: first phase

- A. "Europe First" and the evolution of Pacific strategy
- B. Defeat in the Philippines
- C. The "two vital flanks:" India, China, and Burma on the west; Australia on the east
- D. The first turn of the tide: the Coral Sea and Midway

Reading: Dallek, chapters 12-13; Spector, chapters 6-9

MID-TERM EXAM: MARCH 8

Week 4: March 12-15 (Brisbane)

IV. Pacific offensive

- A. The invasion of Guadalcanal
- B. Strategy debates: MacArthur vs. Nimitz
- C. "Island hopping" and jungle victories
- D. The politics of Anglo-American alliance

Reading: Spector, chapters 10-13; Dallek, chapters 14-15

Week 5: March 19-22

V. Global Pacific conflict

- A. The Marianas and beyond
- B. The Burma and India campaigns
- C. The war in China
- D. "Strangers in a Strange Land:" Australia as a case study

Reading: Spector, chapters 14-18; Dallek, chapter 16 and epilogue

Week 6: March 26-29

VI: Victory in the Pacific

- A. "I shall return:" MacArthur's invasion of the Philippines
- B. The home islands: Iwo Jima and Okinawa
- C. The air and submarine war against Japan
- D. The decision to drop the bomb: Hiroshima, Nagasaki, and the Japanese surrender

Reading: Spector, chapters 19-23; Dallek, afterword

RESEARCH ESSAY DUE ON OR BEFORE MARCH 27 (NO EXTENSIONS GRANTED)

FINAL EXAM : MARCH 30

