BRITISH STUDIES GRADUATE PROGRAM
WORLD WAR II, THE EUROPEAN THEATRE IN LONDON
HISTORY 5003 & 5003

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COURSE DESCRIPTION
Situated in Queen Mary College, University of London, the six hour credit course is a study of the salient military, diplomatic, political, and social aspects of the Second World War, European Theatre. It is a unique opportunity for students to gain “hands on” experiences in one of the critical epicenters of that monumental conflict, London. Because Great Britain was a major participant in the war, students will have direct access to many of the wartime landmarks and the varied weaponry. The course is divided into organized field trips across London and England and select lectures by noted experts in the field. It is a singular opportunity to absorb significant historical events where the action actually occurred in an enlightening and enjoyable way. The course is open to both history and non-history oriented students (electives option). And along with the $1,000.00 scholarship given to each MSU student, the History Department will give an additional $500.00 to history majors and graduate students enrolled at Midwestern State University.

COURSE OBJECTIVE:
◆ To spur students towards critical thinking and lively discussion over the principal causes, events and results of World War II.
◆ To expose students to the varied and sometimes complex activities and relationships of the belligerents and their leaders.
◆ To have students comprehend the unique British wartime predicaments and see how the island nation came to meet and overcome those challenges.
◆ To have students recognize and master essential war-related terms, issues and major themes.
◆ To offer students the opportunity to both learn and have fun in the month-long course; a happy mix of cerebral activity and a sense of wonder and delight in one of the great world cities, London.
FIELD TRIPS:

Historical field trips form an integral part of the course. In order for the students to get “a feel” for history, it is necessary to visit and experience select World War II related sites across London and England. These would include:

- Allied Duxford Air Base and Museum near Cambridge which boasts one of the finest collections of old and new military fire power in the world. A side trip to Cambridge will be taken to go “punting” alongside the famous university.
- British Cabinet War Rooms, the underground bunker complex where Prime Minister Winston Churchill directed the war effort. An adjoining Churchill Museum is both extensive and interactive.
- British Parliament, the historic seat of the UK Government with students gaining access to the chambers of the House of Lords and House of Commons.
- Bletchley Park, a secluded mansion where a team of code breakers broke the German military codes and thus hastened the end of the war.
- The honey-combed secret Wartime Tunnels located within the famed White Cliffs of Dover on the English coast which acted as the first line of defense. Historic Dover Castle also will be called upon.
- Canterbury, a once heavily bombed south English town which included sections of its venerated and towering medieval cathedral.
- *HMS Belfast*, the one surviving WWII British Warship docked on the Thames River in which one is able to thoroughly investigate the vessel.

Additional provisional on-site visits include an American WWII cemetery, the Royal Air Force Museum, the Royal Air Force Museum, the D-Day Museum and the National Army Museum.

Readings:

Graduate Students are required to read one WWII based monograph. In turn they will write a directed book review over their select work. The war-related book can be over a variety of topics including military, diplomatic, social, cultural, or holocaust issues, among others. The book review will be due at the end of September.

Research Paper:

Graduate students will produce at the least, a twenty to twenty-five page paper based in part on primary source material drawn from London research centers such as the British National Archives. Topics will be chosen in conjunction with the professor who will be available to aid students in their research process while in London.

Class Participation and Attendance:

Class attendance is mandatory for all events. Each unexcused absence will result in the reduction of the final letter grade.
Discussion and questions are to be led by the graduate students during class time. They should always provide appropriate leadership and promote a professional attitude both in and out of the classroom, i.e., to lead by example. Students will be held accountable for all the material presented in class and during the field trips.

**Final Exam and Grading:**

Graduate students will take a comprehensive essay-based Final Exam on the last scheduled day of class. The material will be drawn from the lectures, discussions, and field trips. The exam will constitute 40% of the final grade. The Research Paper will be 35% of the final tally. The book review will be 15% while class participation will be the final 10% of the total grade. It is hoped that the graduate students, through the British Studies experience, will be appropriately rewarded in the end.

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