

HISTORY 3412G
Britain's Sailors, Soldiers and Empire: 1689-1902
Fall/Winter 2022-23
Tuesdays 2:30-5:30 pm

Instructor: Professor Allyson N. May

Office Hours: TBD

Department of History, Office: Lawson Hall 1205

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Course Description:

This course examines the emergence of Britain as an imperial power in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and the military means by which that empire was acquired (and lost). It explores both soldiers' and sailors' lives and the effects of war on state formation and national identity within Britain.

Prerequisite(s):

1.0 History course at the 2200 level or above.

Unless you have either the prerequisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. The decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Course Syllabus:

This course examines the emergence of Britain as an imperial power in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and the military means by which that empire was acquired (and lost). It explores both the day-to-day realities of soldiers' and sailors' lives and the changing experience of military engagement as well as race relations and the effects of war on state formation and national identity within Britain.

We will meet weekly for two-hour lectures. The class will also meet five times for colloquia (discussion of shared readings) in the third hour. Depending on the number of students, the colloquia may be split into two groups.

Learning outcomes:

On completion of this course students will have

Mastered the chronology of Britain's acquisition of empire in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries

Grasped the geographical extent of the British empire in this period and Britain's military engagement with European rivals

Become familiar with the nature of military and naval engagement, including the impact of organizational and technological change

Become aware of the role played not just by military and naval commanders but soldiers and sailors in the ranks

Understood the significance of empire for British national identity

Improved their skills in both oral and written communication

Course Materials:

Required texts:

Lawrence James, *The Rise and Fall of the British Empire* (Abacus, 1995)

Patrick O'Brian, *Master and Commander* (Harper, 2002)

Primary documents for discussion will be made available online.

Methods of Evaluation:

Students must complete all coursework. Failure to complete all assigned coursework will result in a failing grade.

Assignment 1 (book report, due TBD): 30%

Assignment 2 (research essay, due TBD): 35%

Final exam: 35%

Students will write a **1500-word** book report on Patrick O'Brian's novel, *Master and Commander*. They will also write a **2500-word** research essay on a topic of their own choosing. Topics must be approved by the professor; papers submitted without approval of the topic will not be graded.

You are expected to meet the deadlines for these assignments. A late penalty of 2% per day, including weekends, will be assigned if an extension has not been granted. Extensions **must** be sought via Academic Counselling. Apart from the penalty, late papers will be graded without comment.

You are also expected to adhere to the word-lengths specified for both the book report and the research essay.

Attendance at both the lectures and colloquia is essential to passing the course. I do not provide notes for students who have missed lectures or colloquia.

Additional Statements:

Please review the Department of History Course Must-Knows document, <https://www.history.uwo.ca/undergraduate/Docs/Department%20of%20History%20Course%20Must-Knows.pdf>, for additional information regarding:

- Academic Offences
- Accessibility Options
- Medical Issues
- Plagiarism
- Scholastic Offences
- Copyright
- Health and Wellness

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