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

Dr. Dirk Lindemann – dirk.lindemann@mwsu.edu
Dept of History – PYCHSS –OD 221
MUS 4310 Taft Blvd
Wichita Falls TX 76308
O: 940-397-4147-- H: 940-689-8679

NATURE OF THE COURSE:

The class is a study of the critical military, political, and social aspects of World War II. It is a unique opportunity for graduate students to gain “hands-on” experiences of the monumental events of the 20th Century in one of the great international cities of the world, London. Because Britain was a major participant in the conflict, students will have access to many vestiges of the last great war (1939-1945), be it classic tanks, planes or war related sites. Both the British National Archives and the Imperial War Museum have unmatched research materials and artifacts of the conflict. The course will be divided, generally speaking, into one-third guest lectures by the professor of record, one-third guest lectures by noted experts in the field, one-third on-sight visits across both London and England.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

◆ To promote and develop an understanding of the variegated and sometimes complex activities and relationships of the various belligerents and their leaders. It will also examine the hardships endured by the civilian populations.
◆ To spur lively discussion and critical thinking over the causes of the war, the major military and political events and the many controversial issues surrounding the conflict.
◆ To develop an appreciation of the unique British wartime predicaments and understand how the nation came to meet and overcome those challenges.
◆ To further elevate one’s research skills concerning the utilization of primary research documents of the various British research centers.
◆ To make graduate students appreciably smarter and more worldly, if not wiser, through their participation in the British Studies program.

FIELD TRIPS:

Historical field trips form an integral part of the course. In order for the graduate students to get “a feel” for history, it is necessary to visit select World War II sites across England. These would include the Allied Duxford Air Base, the Churchill Cabinet War Rooms and Museum, the Allied Code-Breaking site at Bletchly Park, the Halls of Parliament and the D-Day Tunnels at Dover.
READINGS:

Graduate students are required to read two W W II based monographs. In turn, they will write two book reviews over the assigned readings. They will be due in early Fall.

RESEARCH PAPER:

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

CLASS PARTICIPATION AND ATTENDANCE:

Class attendance is mandatory. Each unexcused absence will result in the reduction of the final letter grade. Discussion and questions are encouraged and to be led by the graduate students. Graduate students will be held accountable for all the material presented in class.

FINAL EXAM AND GRADING:

Graduate students will take an essay-based Final Exam. They must not only incorporate the essential facts but add analysis as well. The material will be drawn from the lectures, discussions, and field trips. The exam will constitute 50% of the final grade. The term paper will be 40% of the final tally while 10% will deal with class participation.

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