To: Dr. Natalia Ruiz-Rubio, General Education Coordinating Committee Chair  
From: Dr. James K. Kieswetter, Professor Emeritus of History  
Date: June 19, 2013  
Subject: Assessment of History 350, History of War and Society, as General Education  
International Studies Course

In Winter Quarter 2013 I assessed History 350, which is taught once per year, according to Coal 1: "For students to understand at least one modern problem linking societies within the global community."

Wars are ubiquitous and, in almost all cases, international in many ways. Wars involve certain broad problems and issues which must be confronted or addressed by those societies involved. The History of War and Society deals with many of those broad topics and issues.

Attached is the History 350 Assessment Instrument, consisting of ten objective questions and four short essay questions (students are instructed to answer any two of the four). The objective questions are scored simply on the choice of the one correct answer from among the four options. The short-answer questions are scored as passing if the student evidences a fair comprehension of the ideas or concepts involved in their historical context. The Assessment Instrument was administered early in the first week of the quarter and again in the last week, or as sometimes termed pre- and post-tests. Please see the attached table of results.

Comparison of pre- and post-test scores on the objective questions reveals, with only one exception, some improvement in scores on all questions and marked improvement on most. The only exception was Question 10 on which the proportion of correct answers remained exactly the same. This question, incidentally, was drawn both from the textbook and from in-class lecture and discussion.

The short-answer essay responses greatly improved, both in terms of percentage of students who wrote correct answers and in the proportion of students in the class who felt comfortable enough with the subjects to answer any of them. The fact that many more students—approximately triple the proportion on the pre-test—wrote these questions on the post-test speaks well of their improvement as also does the significant increase in the percentage of correct answers.

Aside from the fine-tuning and constant up-dating that should always be going on in any course, I see no major changes that are needed in this course. The results on Question 10, mentioned above, are puzzling. Perhaps increased in-class discussion of the subject, is in order.
History 350 Assessment

The History Department requests your assistance in improving History 350, the course in which you are enrolled. Please answer the following questions to the best of your ability. You are not graded on your answers so please do not provide your name.

1. The typical warriors of feudal Europe were:
   1. serfs or peasants armed with axes and mallets.
   2. mounted knights who also formed a political and social elite.
   3. slaves captured abroad.

2. The application of reason and logic, a favorite method of the Enlightenment, resulted in which change in warfare in Europe:
   1. the introduction of smokeless gunpowder.
   2. the use of line tactics in the infantry.
   3. the use of chemical warfare.

3. Which of the following was NOT a factor in the American decision to use the atomic bomb against Japan in World War II:
   1. losses the Americans suffered on Iwo Jima and Okinawa.
   2. hesitation to reveal to the world that the U.S. had nuclear weapons.
   3. expected fanatical Japanese resistance to a conventional invasion of the Japanese home islands.
   4. the U.S. desire to end the war as quickly as possible.

4. Controversy over King George III's conduct of the American revolutionary war resulted in the British adoption of:
   1. the principle of ministerial responsibility which became a major demand of political liberals elsewhere for over a century.
   3. naval impressment to assure an adequate supply of sailors for the Royal Navy.
   4. funding to build Dreadnoughts.

5. In the English wars against the French in North America in the 18th century, many Native American tribes supported the French because:
   1. the French had better trade goods.
   2. the French treated them with more respect.
   3. they thought the French were emissaries from the Great Spirit.
   4. French was similar to Native American languages while English was not.

6. The influence of the German noble class in the German General Staff prior to and during World War I resulted in:
   1. the exemption of their sons from military service.
   2. support for the Austrian Emperor Francis Joseph.
   3. their influence on Germany's war aims.
   4. opposition to Germany developing air power.

7. The Pax Britannica refers to:
   1. a venereal disease spread by British sailors in foreign seaports.
   2. a British-imposed world order based on sea power.
   3. the Monroe Doctrine.
   4. British efforts to maintain world power through the League of Nations.
8. The Geneva convention of 1864, the Hague Conferences of 1899 and 1907, and the Kellogg-Briand Pact of 1928 were all international efforts to:
   1. prevent war or at least limit its horrors.
   2. exchange military technology so that no one country could have an advantage.
   3. forbid mechanised war of any kind.
   4. prevent the development of nuclear weapons.

9. Mutually assured destruction (MAD) referred to:
   1. the development of nerve gas.
   2. the massing of nuclear arsenals by the U.S. and the U.S.S.R.
   3. the adoption of unrestricted submarine warfare in World War II.
   4. the use of bacteriological warfare.

10. The Atlantic Charter of 1941 was drafted and published to:
    1. coordinate the effort against German submarines in the Atlantic.
    2. to cooperate in developing new, more accurate maps of the Atlantic Ocean.
    3. to establish Anglo-American post-war aims to explain participation in the war effort.
Short Answer Essay Section

Please answer any TWO of the following questions in short essay form (one paragraph each of no more than one-half page maximum).

1. Explain the rationale for going to war as codified by Carl von Clausewitz and as also found in the writings of Sun Tzu and in the strategy of Abraham Lincoln.

2. Mao Tse-tung described guerrillas as "the fish that swim in the sea." What did Mao mean by "the sea" and what advantage would guerrillas gain by "swimming" in it?

3. Explain how technology influenced the course of World War I on the western front during the first five months (August-December of 1914) of the war.

4. Discuss the factors or criteria that come into play in deciding "who shall serve when not all shall serve" when a country mobilizes its population for war.

PLEASE BEGIN YOUR ANSWERS HERE AND USE THE REVERSE SIDE IF NEEDED.
History 350
Assessment Instrument Results

Objective Questions

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Short Answer Essay Questions

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Note: Objective Question data are tabulated on the basis of the total number of students who took the test, i.e., 49 for the Pre-Test and 43 for the Post-Test. Short Answer Essay data are tabulated as a percentage of the number of students who wrote each of the four questions and answered the question correctly.