History 280A
Graduate Reading Seminar: Topics in World History
THE SAMURAI
Fall 2015; Mondays 6:00-8:50; Academic Resource Center 1008

General Information
Prof. Jeffrey Dym
Office: Tahoe 3088 e-mail: Dym@csus.edu
Office Hours: Mondays 4:30-5:30, Tuesdays 11:00-12:00,
Wednesdays 10:00-11:00, and by appointment

Catalog Description
This seminar will examine the history of the samurai warrior, from their emergence in
the Heian period to their elimination in the Meiji period. The course will focus
primarily on secondary sources starting with The First Samurai and ending with The
Last Samurai. We will also read a few primary source treatises on samurai
philosophy, such as Miyamoto Musashi’s The Book of Five Rings. The course will
focus on the idea of what is a samurai and how did the image and role of the samurai
evolve over time.

Course Objectives
• To gain a deeper understanding of the nature of historical scholarship.
• To delve into the interpretation of history through an examination of the evolution
  of the samurai warriors of Japan.
• To gain a sense of how to read, think, and write critically about history.
• To understand how historians piece together and interpret history based on the
  fragmentary evidence that remains.

Required Texts
1. Karl Friday, The First Samurai: The Life and Legend of the Warrior Rebel, Taira
2. William Wayne Farris, Heavenly Warriors: The Evolution of Japan’s Military 500-
3. Jeffrey Mass, Yoritomo and the Founding of the First Bakufu: The Origins of Dual
   Government in Japan, (Stanford, 1999).
4. Paul H. Varley, Warriors of Japan: As Portrayed in the War Tales, (Hawaii, 1994).
5. Mikael S. Adolphson, The Teeth and Claws of the Buddha: Monastic Warriors and
6. Thomas Conlan, State of War: The Violent Order of the Fourteenth-Century Japan,
   (Michigan, 2003)
7. Peter D. Shapinsky, Lords of the Sea: Pirates, Violence and Commerce in Late
   Medieval Japan, (Michigan, 2014).
10. Constantine Vaporis, Tour of Duty: Samurai, Military Service in Edo and the Culture
    of Early Modern Japan, (Hawaii, 2008).

**Requirements and Grading Criteria**

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<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tr>
<td>Class participation</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion leader</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Position papers</td>
<td>50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Paper</td>
<td>10%</td>
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**Readings**

Since everyone is required to participate in the class discussion, it is imperative that you do the reading.

**Class Participation**

Class participation forms a major portion of your grade. Everyone is expected to be prepared and to participate in class discussions. I am looking for quality insightful comments.

**Discussion Leader**

Every week one or two students will lead the class discussion on the reading. Discussion leaders must come to class prepared to lead the discussion with prepared discussion points. Discussion leaders do not have to turn in a paper for the book they are leaders on.

**Position Papers**

Position papers should be double spaced and at least 600 words, but no more than 1000 words in length. Roughly two to three pages. These papers should contain a succinct summary of the thesis of the work and your critical reaction to it. Through the position paper you must show me that you have thought critically about the reading. Do not summarize the reading! Focus on the thesis of the reading and write a cogent and analytical paper that takes a position for or against the thesis and is supported with evidence. Position papers must take into consideration who the author is and what sources are used to back up the arguments. Position papers should be clearly organized and well written.

You must write a position paper for every reading, except for the one in which you are the discussion leader. For certain weeks I will guide you in terms of a focus for your paper. **I will not accept any late position papers.**

**Final Paper**

Your final paper should be between 4,000-5,000 words in length (8-10 pages) and should answer the following question: “Who were the samurai?” Your answer should incorporate at least 6 of the scholarly readings we have done over the course of the semester into the answer.
**Attendance**

You are expected to attend every class, arrive on time, stay to the end, and to participate in class discussions. Your participation is an integral part of your grade.

I understand that you have busy lives and that emergencies do arise. Thus, you are allowed to miss one class before absences affect your grade. Miss two classes your final grade will be lowered by 1/3 a grade (e.g. B+ to a B), miss three classes a full grade (e.g. B+ to C+), missing 4 classes will result in you automatically failing the class.

**Academic Honesty**

This course follows the CSUS Academic Honesty policy. If you are not familiar with California State University, Sacramento’s Policies and Procedures Regarding Academic Honesty, please read them. They can be found at:

[http://www.csus.edu/umanual/AcademicHonestyPolicyandProcedures.htm](http://www.csus.edu/umanual/AcademicHonestyPolicyandProcedures.htm)

In short, **CHEATING OR PLAGIARISM** will not be tolerated and may result in failure of the course and possible referral for academic discipline. I expect your CECs to be your own work. If it is not, beware!

**Course Outline and Schedule**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>READINGS</th>
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<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Aug. 31</td>
<td>Introduction to Course</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Sept. 7</td>
<td>Memorial Day</td>
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<td>Week 3</td>
<td>Sept. 14</td>
<td>Karl Friday, <em>The First Samurai: The Life and Legend of the Warrior Rebel, Taira Masakado.</em></td>
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<td>Week 6</td>
<td>Oct. 5</td>
<td>Paul H. Varley, <em>Warriors of Japan: As Portrayed in the War Tales.</em></td>
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<td>Week 10</td>
<td>Nov. 2</td>
<td>Stephen Turnbull, <em>War in Japan 1467-1615</em></td>
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<td>Week 11</td>
<td>Nov. 9</td>
<td>Mary Berry, <em>Hideyoshi</em></td>
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<td>Week 12</td>
<td>Nov. 16</td>
<td>Constantine Vaporis, <em>Tour of Duty: Samurai, Military Service in Edo and the Culture of Early Modern Japan.</em></td>
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<td>Week 13</td>
<td>Nov. 23</td>
<td>Hiroaki Sato, <em>Legends of the Samurai.</em> (Selections)</td>
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<td>Week 14</td>
<td>Nov. 30</td>
<td>Mark Ravina, <em>The Last Samurai: The Life and Battles of Saigo Takamori.</em></td>
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<td>Week 15</td>
<td>Dec. 7</td>
<td>Inazo Nitobe, <em>Bushido: The Soul of Japan</em></td>
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**Final Paper Due: Monday, Dec. 14th, between 6:00-6:30.**