

Maritime Piracy MAST 441

Course Information:

Spring 2018
Course Website: eCampus

Contact Information:

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Office: CLB 217
Office Hours: Thurs. by appt.

Course Description and Prerequisites

This course is designed as an in depth discussion of piracy throughout history. As such, we will study the crimes of pirates and the attempts by various societies to catch, punish, and prevent pirate activities. We will also discuss the portrayal of pirates in popular culture and discuss how this impacts our ability to understand and fight piracy in the real world.

Prerequisites: Junior or senior classification or approval of instructor.

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Recognize the problems and trends in piracy over time.
- Identify major international initiatives to fight piracy.
- Understand the difference between the dangers of maritime piracy and the representations of pirates in pop culture.
- Conduct original research on topics in piracy.

Required Texts

There are two required texts for purchase for this class:

Rediker, Marcus. 2005. *Villains of All Nations: Atlantic Pirates in the Golden Age*. Beacon Press.

McKnight, Terry. 2012. *Pirate Alley: Commanding Task Force 151 Off Somalia*. Naval Institute Press.

In addition, PDF readings will be posted to eCampus.

Course Requirements

(1) **Research Paper:** Each student will be responsible for writing an original 10-12 page research paper analyzing an aspect of conflict and security covered in this course. This paper will require students to do research beyond the materials covered in the course, and should show high level thinking about the chosen aspect of maritime piracy. This paper will be due in stages, and all stages combined are worth 50% of the course grade. See the separate handout for more information about the research paper.

(2) **Poster Presentation:** After completing their research paper, students will be responsible for writing up an academic poster presenting their findings. This will be in the style of a typical research poster for an academic conference. A template and examples will be provided to students to aid in the creation of this poster, but the work discussed in it will be that conducted by the student during the writing of their research paper. This is worth 25% of your grade.

(3) **Discussion Board:** Students are responsible for posting to the discussion board on eCampus every week except weeks when exam papers are due. Students are responsible for posting one original post (OP) and one response post (RP) per week. This is worth 25% of your grade. Detailed instructions are found below.

Discussion Requirements

Note that taking part in the discussion board for this class is a requirement, and failure to complete the discussion assignments will negatively impact your grade. The discussion board posts are worth 100 points total and 25% of your overall grade for the course. There are ten weeks of discussion posts; each week is worth 10 points total.

Format and style: Your posts should use formal academic writing. This means that there should be no slang, abbreviations, ALL CAPS, or use of emoji or other symbols. You must use standard default fonts in order to be sure that your words will display correctly across multiple computers and operating systems. Spelling and grammar must be correct and you must write in complete sentences.

Original Posts (OP): You must post at least one OP for each discussion week. Your OP must be at least 200 words long and follow the guidelines listed above for spelling/grammar, etc. You must be on topic to the discussion and contribute an original position or thought to the discussion. Therefore, this should not be a mere summary of the readings or recap of someone else's position – it should be your original thoughts on the topic.

Reply Posts (RP): You are also required to reply to one of your classmates' posts. This post should be at least 100 words long and contribute something substantive to your classmate's thoughts. It should not consist solely of either a compliment or an attack, but rather be a thoughtful comment on their original post. You should also address your classmate by name to make it clear whose comment you are responding to.

All Posts: In order to receive full credit for your discussion posts, you must follow these guidelines. I want to see your original thoughts and understanding in both your OP and your RP each week, as well as a reflection of the week's course material in your discussion and the evidence you provide. Failure to do so will result in a lower grade.

Grading Rubric:

10 points: OP and RP are both of the correct length, reflect original thought and course reference material, and follow the other guidelines above.

7 points: Either OP or RP are present but ONE of these is either not of the correct length or does not follow the guidelines above.

5 points: Only one of the OP or RP was completed according to the guidelines above.

3 points: Either both OP and RP fail to reflect the above guidelines, or one is missing and the other does not reflect the guidelines.

0 points: No postings.

Posts Due on Fridays by 23:59.

Course Letter Grades

Final course letter grades will be assigned based on the following scale:

A: 90-100

B: 80-89

C: 70-79

D: 60-69

F: 59 and below

I will not respond to end of semester emails requesting a grade change.

Absences from Exams and Late Work

Makeup exams will be allowed when students are participating in formally sanctioned University events if proper documentation is provided to the instructor prior to the exam. Makeup exams will also be allowed in the case of an extraordinary circumstance if accompanied by sufficient documentation within two days after the exam. The instructor reserves the right to determine what constitutes an extraordinary circumstance.

Academic Honor Policy

An Aggie does not lie, cheat, or steal, nor tolerate those who do. Cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Students committing these violations will be punished according to University policy. Be familiar with what constitutes plagiarism; ignorance is not an excuse. See <http://www.tamug.edu/HonorSystem> for more details.

Courtesy in the Classroom

Attention to classroom courtesy is necessary to ensure that all students have the opportunity to learn without distraction. As such, please silence and put away all cell phones and other electronic devices during class time. Please be on time to class and remain in class until you are dismissed. If you must arrive late or leave early, please take the seat nearest an exit, and enter or leave as quietly as possible. Please show respect for your fellow students by refraining from

talking during lectures, as well as when other students are speaking. Similarly, please respect the opinions of your fellow students, even if you are in disagreement with them. Repeated disruption of class will lead to a reduction of your final grade.

Americans With Disabilities (ADA) Policy Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Counseling Office, Seibel Student Center, or call (409)740-4587. For additional information see <http://www.tamug.edu/counsel/Disabilities.html>.

Course Outline**

Week 1 (January 16-19)	Introduction to Course (Readings on eCampus)
Discussion Week 1	
Week 2 (January 22-26)	Greco-Roman Piracy (eCampus)
Discussion Week 2	
Week 3 (January 29-February 2)	Golden Age of Piracy (Rediker)
February 2: Research Paper Topic Due	
Week 4 (February 5-9)	Golden Age of Piracy cont. (Rediker)
Discussion Week 3	
Week 5 (February 12-16)	Privateering (eCampus)
Discussion Week 4	
Week 6 (February 19-23)	Economics of Piracy (eCampus)
February 23: Research Paper Abstract Due	
Week 7 (February 26-March 2)	Development of Piracy Laws (eCampus)
Discussion Week 5	
Week 8 (March 5-9)	Current Anti-Piracy Law (eCampus)
Discussion Week 6	
Week 9 (March 12-16)	SPRING BREAK
Discussion Week 7	
Week 10 (March 19-23)	Piracy in Southeast Asia (eCampus)
March 23: Research Paper First Draft Due	
Week 11 (March 26-30)	Piracy in Somalia (McKnight)
Discussion Week 8	
Week 12 (April 2-6)	Piracy in Somalia cont. (McKnight)
Discussion Week 9	
Week 13 (April 9-13)	Piracy in the Gulf of Guinea (eCampus)
April 13: Research Paper Final Draft Due	
Week 14 (April 16-20)	Piracy in Popular Culture – Literature (eCampus)
Discussion Week 10	
Week 15 (April 23-27)	Piracy in Popular Culture – Other Media (eCampus)
April 27: Research Poster Due	

Week 16 (April 30-May 1)

Extra Credit Discussion Week

**** The syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change if necessary.**