DHP H205: THE HISTORIAN’S ART AND CURRENT AFFAIRS- Sulmaan Khan

Course Description:
We all use history, whether consciously or unconsciously, to understand the present and make decisions about the future. But we misuse it all too often and to our peril. Through a series of case studies, this course aims to give students the historical powers they need as they go out into the world: empathy, detachment, and relentless scepticism.

Assignments:
Three four page papers and one take-home final exam.

Required readings:
Ernest May and Richard Neustadt, Thinking in Time.
Barbara Tuchman, The Guns of August.
Rudyard Kipling, Kim.
Paul Kennedy, The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers.
Roberta Wohlstetter, Pearl Harbor: Warning and Decision.
Caroline Fraser, Rewilding the World.

Additional readings available on Trunk.

Note:
Doing all the readings thoroughly is important. You will get nothing out of the course if you do not complete the readings; experience shows that your grade will suffer too (you cannot do the assignments competently without having done the reading). One of the skills you will need in the course--- and in life--- is the ability to digest large amounts of information accurately in a short time. The only way of developing this skill is practice.

It might prove helpful to read as many of the books as you can before the semester starts.

The Guns of August is the reading assignment for the first session. That means you are to come to class having completed it.

Electronics Policy
The use of laptops or other electronic devices is not permitted in this class.

Sessions:

1) **The Origins of World War I.** Readings: Tuchman, The Guns of August
2) The Cuban Missile Crisis. Readings: May and Neustadt, xi-16, Kennedy Tapes, excerpts


4) Appeasement. Readings: Chamberlain, Churchill, and all; Snyder.


6) Korea. Readings: May and Neustadt, 34-48, Truman, excerpts

7) Vietnam. Readings: May and Neustadt, 75-90, 157-171, Halberstam, excerpts


14) Placing Japan: The Okinawa Base and More. FT coverage; Yamada.

15) Taiwan Tangle. Readings TBA. Second paper due.

17) **Shifting Power: Big History.** Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers.*

18) **The “Liberal World Order”.** Readings TBA.

19) **The Trump Presidency As Contemporary History.** Readings TBA.

20) **Analogies in Court: Japanese-American Internment and the Muslim Ban.**
   
   Readings TBA.


22) **The Environment as a Security Problem.** Readings: Fraser, *Rewilding the World;* Brook, excerpts, Parker, excerpts. FT coverage.

23) **The Great Game and Af-Pak.** Readings: Kipling, *Kim,* Mason and Johnson, “No Sign Until the Burst of Fire”.


25) **The Historian as Prophet.** Readings: Gaddis, excerpts, Kennan, “The Long Telegram”.

26) **Thinking like a Historian.** Readings: May and Neustadt. **Final exam due.**