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**Raymond Callahan** is Professor Emeritus of history and was the first Director of MALS --which he describes as the best job he had in 38 years at UD. He is an historian of the British Empire at war, and his most recent book, Churchill and his Generals , has been made a History Book Club selection. He is currently working on a history of Britain's Indian Army.

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

#### **MALS610 (core course): Force, Conflict and Change**

The focus of this course is how the past becomes “History” – the textbook certainties we are all so familiar with. The approach will be along case study lines: a notable turning point, a famous person, an enduring issue. The course will be conducted in the manner you have all become accustomed to – reading, discussion and the submission of a reflective essay at the end of the semester. Now for the details.

#### **Required Reading:**

(NB. These titles - all paper editions – can be purchased from Borders, Amazon or Barnes & Noble as well as from the UD Bookstore).

Garrett Mattingly, *The Armada* (American Heritage Library)  
A classic of historical writing.

Geoffrey Best, *Churchill: A Study in Greatness* (Oxford University Press)  
The best one-volume account of this astonishing man.

Rudyard Kipling *Kim* (Penguin or any other edition)  
Often treated as a children’s book, it isn’t.

Peter Hopkirk, *The Great Game* (Kodansha Globe)  
A study of the imperial impulse – and its costs.

## Class Discussion Sessions

### **Introduction: “Don’t know much about his-tor-ee”** (August 31)

Is the past really “a foreign country” where things are done “differently”? Should history school books extol national heroes – or explore the issues that roiled the nation’s past?

### **Case 1. “The Winds of God”** (September 7, 14, 28) – Reading: Mattingly, *The Armada*

We all know, at least in outline, the story. A great Spanish invasion fleet, sent to bring the pesky English Protestants and their illegitimate ruler to hell and the true faith, is beaten by Elizabeth’s leadership and the seamanship and gunnery of her “sea dogs,” not to mention God’s pro-English bias. This version of the story was found in English (later British) histories for centuries – and contributed to the development of the British sense of who they were (see John Gaunt’s soliloquy in Shakespeare’s *Richard II*: “...this sceptered isle...”). But, perhaps, matters were not quite that straightforward...?

*NB: The class will not meet on September 21.*

### **Case 2. “The Greatest Englishman”** (October 5, 12, 19, 26) – Reading: Best, *Churchill*

Winston Churchill is a classic example of a type that a German philosopher called “world historical figures.” In addition to his personal impact on history – most crucially in 1940 – his talent as memoirist has put his version of events at the heart of the popular understanding of World War II in the English-speaking world. He is therefore the perfect case study of the classic question: How much can one individual affect history?

### **Case 3. *Empire*** (November 2, 9, 16, 30) – Reading: Kipling, *Kim*; Hopkirk, *The Great Game*

History shows us an imperial cycle: a successful state, morphing into an empire, followed sooner or later – and sometimes much later – by decline, decay and collapse. A very accessible exemplar of this cycle is the British Empire, and a good way to approach that sprawling amalgam is by looking at its most significant unit: the Raj.

### **Conclusion: “A day that will live in infamy”?** (December 7)

This surely is an appropriate day to ponder what – if anything – we can conclude about the subtle and changing relationship between the past and the way we come to regard it.

## Required Paper

The course papers are due December 7 and should be about 15 pages, exclusive of notes and bibliography. This is not to be a research paper but an interpretive essay on the lines of the review essays found in the *Times Literary Supplement* or *The New York Review of Books* – i.e., a commentary on a book that draws on other writings on the topic.

For example - Best presents an explanation and analysis of Gallipoli, perhaps the most controversial episode in Churchill’s career. A review essay on this topic would require looking at Churchill’s own account (*The World Crisis*, vol.2); perhaps as well as the original documents on which his account is based, now available in print (Martin Gilbert, *Winston S. Churchill: Companion Volume III*); and certainly at some later historian’s account, like Tim Travers’ *Gallipoli 1915*.

The object of the exercise is to examine how the history of a particular event took shape. Organization and writing will be graded as well as argument.

### **Grading**

Course grades will be based on cogent and relevant class participation (40%) as well as on the required paper (60%).