

HISTORY OF VIETNAM

SUMMARY:

For a whole generation of men and women on both sides of the conflict, the Vietnam War remains the defining event of their lives, as World War I, the Great Depression or World War II did for earlier generations. While policymakers continue to debate the "lessons of Vietnam," ordinary Americans and Vietnamese are still learning to come to terms with the impact of the war on their personal lives. As recent scholarship makes clear, the Vietnam War was an extremely complex phenomenon in which a struggle for decolonization and social revolution became enmeshed in the Cold War. Vietnam thus became both pawn and symbol of superpower politics. As U.S. relations with the Soviet Union and China changed, so did rationales for continued American involvement in the war from the containment of communism to the pursuit of credibility. The causes of the communist insurgency in Vietnam were similarly complex and changing. The use of powerful new technology by one side and of guerrilla warfare by the other raised serious ethical questions. Finally, the war coincided with domestic turmoil in the United States and, in Vietnam, led to the displacement of huge numbers of people and strained the social fabric.

This course seeks to present a balanced and comprehensive picture of both Vietnamese and American perspectives on the war including the geopolitical concerns that informed decision making, the motivation and domestic appeal of the Vietnamese communists and their indigenous opponents and the experiences of individual men and women who fought in Vietnam or became the war's hapless victims.

OBJECTIVES:

The main purpose of this course is to provide the student with a basic knowledge of the major themes, people, and events in the History of Vietnam. As such, it does not address any particular topic in great detail but hopes to encourage students to pursue further study in any area of interest. A secondary purpose of the course is to familiarize students with the academic discipline of history by introducing them to the practices of historical inquiry and interpretation by analyzing primary sources and by examining differing interpretations of historical phenomena. The course is also designed to develop students' critical thinking skills. Correspondingly, students are asked to reflect on assigned readings, class discussions, and lectures, and to be able to formulate and express thoughtful opinions based upon a sophisticated understanding of historical events, and in this manner, hopefully demonstrate the intellectual and humanitarian value of historical thinking.

READINGS

There is one textbook, and four outside readings. All books for this course can be purchased in any good bookstore, or online at a discount price, and are available in most libraries. The text which is not required will help you in getting a greater understanding of Vietnam and the history of the United States involvement in that country's history. The outside reading will add different interpretations and be part of a greater classroom discussion on Vietnam.

TEXT

Herring, George C., **America's Longest War: The United States and Vietnam, 1950 – 1975**
(4th Edition) New York, N.Y., 2001

ADDITIONAL READINGS

Belknap, Michael, **The Vietnam War on Trial: The My Lai Massacre**, (University of Kansas Press, 2002)

Ehrhart, W.D., **Passing Time**, (University of Massachusetts Press, 1986)

Ninh, Bao, **Sorrow of War**, (Riverhead Books, 1996)

O' Brien, Tim, **The Things They Carried**, (Penguin Books 1990)

MAJOR COURSE REQUIREMENTS

There will be a final examination.

In addition you will be required to write **FOUR (4)** book reviews on your outside readings. You will get opinion papers, and papers pertaining to our outside visitations.

REVIEW OF FIRST MARKING PERIOD REQUIREMENTS

Paper on the O' Brien book: **The Things We Carried**
Paper Due on **30 September, 2004**

Paper on visitation to the **Philadelphia Vietnam Veteran's Memorial**
Paper due by **06 October, 2004**

Included in this paper will be a personal account of your visit to the Philadelphia Vietnam Veteran's Memorial, and the researching of the death of one of the veteran's on the wall. Include an etching of this name from the wall.

Paper: **Music of the Vietnam Era**
Paper Due on **21 October, 2004**

Paper on the Ninh book: **Sorrow of War**
Paper Due on **28 October, 2004**

REVIEW OF SECOND MARKING PERIOD REQUIREMENTS

A personal account of your experiences and feelings during our class trip to the **National Vietnam Memorial** in Washington DC Include finding your Philadelphia veteran and taking an etching of the name of the Washington memorial.

Paper Due on **18 November, 2004**

Paper on the Ehrhart book: **Passing Time**.
Paper Due on **29 November, 2004**

Paper **The Role of Hollywood in War**.
Paper Due on **16 December, 2004**

Paper on the Belknap book: **The Vietnam War on Trial: The My Lai Massacre**
Paper Due on **03 January, 2005**

Final Examination on the date scheduled by the school.
Week of 17 January, 2005

IN ADDITION - EXTRA EVENTS IN THE COURSE

We will have speakers from the Montgomery County Vietnam Veteran's of America.

We will have speakers from the Friend's Peace Committee.

A Sunday bus trip to Arlington National Cemetery and the **National Vietnam Veteran's Memorial** in Washington DC. The date of the trip will be **17 October, 2004**

ALL STUDENTS MUST ATTEND THIS TRIP IT IS PART OF THE SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF THE COURSE

SCHEDULE AND READING LIST

SEPTEMBER **Introduction** - Get familiar with the materials and course procedures
08 – 10

SEPTEMBER **The Roots of a War/Geography, Language, Names, Terms**
13 – 17 In class lecture & video

SEPTEMBER **A Dead - End Alley, 1950 - 1954**
20 - 24 ***The Unites States, France, and the First Indochina War***
Herring, pgs 03 – 51

SEPTEMBER **A Dead – End Alley, 1950 - 1954**
27 - 30 ***The Unites States, France, and the First Indochina War***
OCTOBER Chapter 1 - Herring, pgs 03 – 51
01

BOOK REVIEW # 1 DUE 30 SEPTEMBER, 2004

PHILADELPHIA WAR MEMORIAL PAPER DUE 06 OCTOBER, 2004

OCTOBER **Our Offspring, 1954 - 1961**
04 – 07 ***Nation Building in South Vietnam***
Chapter 2 – Herring, pgs 53 - 87

OCTOBER **Our Offspring, 1954 - 1961**
11 – 15 ***Nation Building in South Vietnam***
Chapter 2 – Herring, pgs 53 - 87

OCTOBER **Limited Partnership, 1961 - 1963**
18 - 22 ***Kennedy and Diem***
Chapter 3 – Herring, pgs 89 – 129

TRIP TO WASHINGTON DC 17 OCTOBER, 2004

PAPER: THE MUSIC OF THE VIETNAM ERA 21 OCTOBER, 2004

OCTOBER **Limited Partnership, 1961 - 1963**
25 – 29 ***Kennedy and Diem***
Chapter 3 – Herring, pgs 89 – 129

BOOK REVIEW # 2 DUE 28 OCTOBER, 2004

NOVEMBER **Enough, But Not Too Much, 1963 - 1965**
01 - 04 ***Johnson's Decisions for War***
Chapter 4 – Herring, pgs 131 - 169

NOVEMBER 08 - 12 **Enough, But Not Too Much, 1963 - 1965**
Johnson's Decisions for War
Chapter 4 – Herring, pgs 131 - 169

WASHINGTON DC TRIP PAPER DUE 18 NOVEMBER, 2004

NOVEMBER 15 - 19 **On The Tiger's Back, 1965 - 1967**
The United States at War
Chapter 5 – Herring, pgs 171 - 223

NOVEMBER 22 - 24 **On The Tiger's Back, 1965 - 1967**
The United States at War
Chapter 5 – Herring, pgs 171 – 223

NOVEMBER 29 – 30 **A Very Near Thing, 1968**
The Tet Offensive and After
DECEMBER 01 - 03 Chapter 6 – Herring, pgs 225 – 269

DECEMBER 06 - 10 **A Very Near Thing, 1968**
The Tet Offensive and After
Chapter 6 – Herring, pgs 225 – 269

BOOK REVIEW # 3 DUE 29 NOVEMBER, 2004

DECEMBER 13 - 17 **A War For Peace, 1969 - 1973**
Nixon, Kissinger, and Vietnam
Chapter 7 – Herring, pgs 271 – 319

PAPER: THE ROLE OF HOLLYWOOD IN WAR 16 DECEMBER, 2004

DECEMBER 20 - 21 **A War For Peace, 1969 - 1973**
Nixon, Kissinger, and Vietnam
JANUARY 03 - 07 Chapter 7 – Herring, pgs 271 – 319

JANUARY 10- 14 **The Postwar War and the Legacies of Vietnam**
Chapter 8 – Herring, pgs 323 - 368

BOOK REVIEW # 4 DUE 03 JANUARY, 2005

FINAL EXAMINATION WEEK OF 17 JANUARY, 2005

REQUIREMENTS:

Students are expected to practice sound habits of scholarship respect. Such habits include but are not limited to: completing reading and written assignments in a timely fashion; being punctual for class meetings; familiarizing oneself with the school's plagiarism and cheating policies; and extending a general attitude of courtesy and consideration to fellow students. Regular attendance is necessary to fulfill the minimum requirements of the class. Missed or incomplete assignments will be made up only in extenuating circumstances and must follow established paper direction format.

- Exam (40% of Final Grade): There will be a final exam. This exam will be based upon assigned readings, class discussions, and lectures and will serve as the primary means of assessing the students' basic knowledge of the major themes, people, and events in the History of Vietnam. The final exam (40% of Final Grade) will be cumulative for entire course.
- Written Response Papers (40% of Final Grade) Students will write four book reviews two each marking period. These papers are designed to afford students the opportunity to reflect upon the assigned chapter reading and secondary source materials and to articulate a formal and thoughtful opinion upon various themes in the History of Vietnam. All papers will use proper writing format which will be given at first class.
- Class Participation (20% of Final Grade) Active participation in class is required. Students should come to each class session prepared to discuss the readings assigned for that class. The class participation grade will be based on attendance, and participation in class discussions. This requirement provides an additional way for assessing the students' achievements pertaining to the above mentioned course objectives.
- **EXCEPT FOR EXCUSED ABSENCES, LATE WORK IS UNACCEPTABLE AND WILL RESULT IN AN AUTOMATIC ZERO**

ALL students **MUST** have everyday in class the following:

Three ring binder 2", with dividers, & paper
Black/Blue pens
#2 Pencils
Highlighter

The LaSalle College high School grading system is used, this is
Located in the Student Program of Studies.

| | | |
|----|---|----------|
| A | = | 100 - 95 |
| A- | = | 94 - 93 |
| B+ | = | 92 - 90 |
| B | = | 89 - 87 |
| B- | = | 86 - 85 |
| C+ | = | 84 - 82 |
| C | = | 81 - 79 |
| C- | = | 78 - 77 |
| D+ | = | 76 - 75 |
| D | = | 74 - 73 |
| D- | = | 72 - 70 |
| F | = | Below 70 |

ALL students must arrive on time

Class begins with a prayer

Sit in **YOUR** assigned seat

ALL students are responsible for staying current in their reading and note taking.

THERE WILL BE NO EATING OR DRINKING IN CLASS

NO WATER BOTTLES