Administrative Unit: History and Social Sciences Department

Course Prefix and Number: HIST 318

Course Title: The Vietnam War

Number of Credit Hours: 3  Lecture Hours: 3  Laboratory Hours: 0

Catalog Description: A study of the war in Vietnam by examining the American involvement in the context of Vietnamese history and culture and the goals of countries outside Vietnam. Events of the war are placed in a multiplicity of contexts to show how ideological, political, diplomatic, social, and economic considerations affected the conduct of the war. The impact of the war on American society, politics, and cold war diplomacy are also examined. Course meets World/Eastern Culture graduation requirement.

Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): HIST 122.

Text(s): The required text must be assigned and supplemented with a minimum of one recommended text. Additional primary and secondary sources focusing on the war from the perspective of the individual soldier, sailor, airman or marine or combat unit may be assigned as well.

Textbook(s) listed are not necessarily the textbook(s) used in the course.

Most current editions of the following:

Required:


Recommended:


Course Objectives:

- To review the impact of French colonialism and World War II
- To place the Vietnam conflict in the context of the Cold War
• To examine the objectives and strategies of the nations involved leading to and during the war
• To trace the evolution of the relationship between the U.S. and South Vietnam
• To examine Vietnamese and American strategies and tactics employed during the various phases of the conflict
• To assess the impact of domestic politics, the anti-war movement and the new media on American policy
• To examine the diplomatic efforts to resolve the conflict
• To assess the legacy of the conflict on Vietnam, Asia and the U.S.

Measurable Learning Outcomes:
• Describe the conditions and events that led to American involvement in Vietnam
• Analyze America’s commitment to Vietnam in the context of the Cold War
• Explain the evolution of American and North Vietnamese military and diplomatic strategy and tactics
• Analyze the impact of domestic politics, the anti-war movement and the news media on American military and diplomatic activities
• Evaluate the successes and failures of American and Vietnamese policy and tactics
• Analyze the consequences of the war in Vietnam on Asian politics and on American society, diplomacy and military strategy

Topical Outline (major areas of coverage):
Because the course represents an upper level history elective, it bears a distinctive responsibility for teaching advanced knowledge within the discipline. It must be distinguished as an advanced course by three structural components: extensive reading, intensive writing, and historiographical thinking. It must require advanced students to complete both in class and out of class projects (i.e., midterms, finals, individual presentations, team reports, quizzes, research papers). It must demand a minimum of 1000 pages of required text reading, 1000 words of type-written work, and a consideration of the range and variance of historical scholarship. Finally, it must develop student skills and abilities for researching diverse sources of knowledge and organizing findings through synthesis.

• Vietnamese history and French Colonialism
• World War II and its aftermath in Vietnam
• American Indo China policy under Truman and Eisenhower
• The Geneva Conference of 1954
• America’s attempt at nation building
• The rise of the insurgency in South Vietnam
• Kennedy’s strategy of limited partnership
• The Buddhist uprising and the overthrow of Diem
• Vietnam and Johnson’s Great Society
• Tonkin Gulf and the deployment of American troops
• Tet and its impact on American and Vietnamese strategy and tactics
• Impact of the anti-war movement and the media
• Vietnamization and Nixon’s quest for “Peace with Honor”
• Invasion of Cambodia and bombing of North Vietnam
• The Paris peace negotiations
• American withdrawal and the impact of the fall of South Vietnam on Southeast Asia
• Legacy of Vietnam on American politics and policy

Material from this course may be tested on the Major Field Test (MFT) administered during the Culminating Experience course for the degree.

Recommended maximum class size for this course: 35

Library Resources: Online databases are available at http://www.ccis.edu/offices/library/resources.asp. You may access them from off-campus using your eServices login and password when prompted.

Prepared by: Gary A. Oedewaldt

Name ____________________________ Signature ____________________________

Date: February 18, 2006

NOTE: The intention of the master syllabus is to provide an outline of the contents of this course, as specified by the faculty of Columbia College, regardless of who teaches the course, when it is taught or where it is taught. Faculty members teaching this course for Columbia College are expected to facilitate learning pursuant to the course objectives and cover the subjects listed in the topical outline. However, instructors are also encouraged to cover additional topics of interest so long as those topics are relevant to the course’s subject. The master syllabus is, therefore, prescriptive in nature but also allows for a diversity of individual approaches to course material.

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