

HISTORY 3580 T03 THE VIETNAM WAR

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course narrates and analyzes the history of the Vietnam War from the perspective of both Vietnamese and Americans. It begins by outlining the history of Vietnam including French colonial involvement. It focuses on the American stage of the war (1965-75) with its repercussions on the rest of the world.

The course is based on a series of bi-weekly lectures interspersed by a film history of the war produced by PBS. The film series should provide the basis for class discussion both of the war and the way it was represented in the media.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS:

Gordon Kerr, A Short History of the Vietnam War (Coldcastle Books Group, 2015)
Robert MacNamara, In Retrospect (Times Books)
Truong N. Tang, A Vietcong Memoir (Vintage, 1986)
Bao Ninh, The Sorrow of War (London, Vintage, 1998)
Phil Caputo, A Rumour of War (Ballantine)

TERM WORK, SCHEDULE, TESTS, AND EVALUATION:

Class work will be worth **60%** of the final grade.

The first assignment is an **in-class essay** on the question: "The French claimed that they were civilizing Vietnam. Did they actually do so?" It will be written in the class of **September 12** following the showing (*on September 10*) of the Youtube film version of episode 1 of *Vietnam: A Television History*. https://youtu.be/zeVbQzDSBS0?list=PL4w-2j6Q0Qj5bQLu6gCb_1zVpd2lYqftR It is worth **(5%)**.

There will be a one hour examination **October 12** based on two of three essay questions **(15%)** and an essay **(40%)** due on the last day of class, **December 7**, 2018. No late essays will be accepted.

The essay will consist of a 3000 word comparative review of the textbooks and the film series based on the premise "the Vietnam war was a mistake". In each case briefly relate the character of the narrative, its perspective, arguments, emphasis, biases, strengths and omissions as they relate to the premise that the war was a mistake. To what degree does a first person narrative better capture the war than a scholarly account? To what extent do nationality, gender and class affect perspective? What is left unsaid and why?

Keep copies of all work.

In addition to handing in a hard-copy of all written assignments, students are required to submit a copy of the paper electronically through UM Learn (as a word document). The file name for the

document should be as follows: SURNAME Given name Assign # HIST 3580 T03

Evaluative feedback will be provided prior to the voluntary withdrawal date, **November 19, 2018**

FINAL EXAMINATION: Based on the full semester's work. You will be required to answer **three** of five essay questions. **(40%)**

Grade Distribution:

A+	(100-90)	C+	(66-60)
A	(89-80)	C	(59-51)
B+	(79-75)	D	(50-40)
B	(74-67)	F	(39-0)

Students who wish to appeal a grade given for term work must do so within 10 working days after the grade for the term work has been made available to them. Uncollected term work will become the property of the Faculty of Arts and will be subject to confidential destruction.

Academic Dishonesty

The University's regulations re: plagiarism, cheating and impersonation may be found in the section on "Academic Integrity" of the General Academic Regulations in the online Academic Calendar, and Catalog and the Faculty of Arts regulation at:

http://umanitoba.ca/faculties/arts/student_resources/student_responsibilities_integrity.html , which reads:

The common penalty in Arts for plagiarism on a written assignment is a grade of F on the paper and a final grade of F (DISC) (for Disciplinary Action) for the course. For the most serious acts of plagiarism, such as purchase of an essay and repeat violations, this penalty can also include suspension for a period of up to five (5) years from registration in courses taught in a particular department/program in Arts or from all courses taught in this Faculty.

The Faculty also reserves the right to submit student work that is suspected of being plagiarized to Internet sites designed to detect plagiarism or to other experts for authentication.

The common penalty in Arts for academic dishonesty on a test or examination is F for the paper, F (DISC) for the course, and a one-year suspension from courses acceptable for credit in the Faculty. For more serious acts of academic dishonesty on a test or examination, such as repeat violations, this penalty can also include suspension for a period of up to five years from registration in courses taught in a particular department or program in Arts or from all courses taught in or accepted for credit by this Faculty.

Student Resources

Academic Resources

You have access to several important resources to help you navigate your classes and university life more generally. There are writing tutors available to help you with your essays through the Academic Learning Centre (ALC): <http://umanitoba.ca/student/academiclearning/>. The History department will also make a writing tutor available exclusively to History students in the department on one day a week. More information about scheduling, etc., TBA.

The ALC page also has resources to help you with study skills, organization, as well as assistance for students using English as an Additional Language (EAL). Other issues, including accessibility services, workshops, and tips about academic integrity are addressed at the Student Advocacy Services webpage (http://umanitoba.ca/student/resource/student_advocacy/).

All of the above services can also be accessed under the heading of Student Resources on the Student Affairs website: <http://umanitoba.ca/student/studentlife/index.html>.

History students can also take advantage of the huge range of academic materials (including primary and secondary sources, as well as pages to help with writing and referencing) made available by the History subject librarian, tailored just for you! They are available on the Libraries page at this link: <http://libguides.lib.umanitoba.ca/history>. Students who need research assistance can also schedule an appointment with a librarian through the website.

Student Counseling Centre

Contact SCC if you are concerned about any aspect of your mental health, including anxiety, stress, or depression, or for help with relationships or other life concerns. SCC offers crisis services as well as counseling. <http://umanitoba.ca/student/counselling/index.html>

Student Support Case Management

Contact the Student Support Case Management team if you are concerned about yourself or another student and don't know where to turn. SSCM helps connect students with on and off campus resources, provides safety planning, and offers other supports, including consultation, educational workshops, and referral to the STATIS threat assessment team.

<http://umanitoba.ca/student/case-manager/index.html>

University Health Service

Contact UHS for any medical concerns, including mental health problems. UHS offers a full range of medical services to students, including psychiatric consultation.

<http://umanitoba.ca/student/health/>

Student Advocacy

Contact Student Advocacy if you want to know more about your rights and responsibilities as a student, have questions about policies and procedures, and/or want support in dealing with academic or discipline concerns. <http://umanitoba.ca/student/advocacy>

UM History Student Association (UMHiSA)

UMHiSA is a history undergraduate student run organization that seeks to establish a sense of community for students studying all facets of history, and provide support for them in their academic career. Students interested in fun times, spirited debate, new opportunities, a community of like-minded students, or all of the above, check out UMHiSA on our instagram account www.instagram.com/umhisa_undergrad/ or by emailing umhisau@gmail.com.

The Indo-China Wars: A Select Bibliography

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1. History 3580 Review Questions

1. What was the geo-political context of the Vietnam War?
2. What were the terms of the Geneva accords? How did the United States choose to interpret them after 1954?
3. 1950 saw the internationalization of the colonial war in Indo-China. Explain why and how this occurred.
4. The Chinese Revolution(1949) deeply affected the policies of both the DRV and the United States. Explain.
5. The communist revolution in Vietnam was spurred by nationalism and agrarian discontent.- Discuss.
6. "Almost until the moment of victory the struggle of the Vietminh against the French and Japanese placed greater emphasis on the struggle against imperialism than against feudalism.- Discuss.
7. Discuss the military strategy of the Vietminh against the French. How did it change in 1950?
8. Despite its professed commitment to anti-colonialism the United States aided French colonialism in Indo-China from 1946 onwards. Why?
9. What were the bases of support of the Diem government?
10. Prior to his assassination U.S. President John Kennedy was seriously considering American withdrawal from Vietnam? True or false.
11. Outline the battle plan of the U.S. general William Westmorland in 1965. How did it reflect the American approach to war?
12. Why did the United States choose to fight a limited war in Vietnam? How did it propose to win the war in 1965?
13. "Tet was a military defeat for the communists, but a great political victory." Discuss
14. "The anti-war movement in the U.S. must be seen as a failure." Discuss.
15. "American internal dissent directly contributed to the Communist victory in Vietnam." Discuss
16. The U.S. could not achieve its goals in Vietnam. How did Nixon's playing of the 'China card' allow the U.S. to change its goals?
17. Outline Nixon and Kissinger's policy of Vietnamization and linkage. How did it differ from Johnson's approach to the Vietnam conflict?

18. Up to 1969 it could be said that the U.S. military had won every engagement in the conflict. Yet from then on its morale disintegrated. Why?
19. In the 1950s and early 1960s it was commonly said that Cambodia was a paradise. How truthful was this view?
20. Explain why Prince Sihanouk attempted to pursue a neutralist policy with respect to the war in Vietnam? Why did he fail?
21. What were the bases of the antagonism between the Vietnamese and Cambodian communist parties?
22. "The failure of U.S. strategy in Vietnam was not a military one. Rather it was a failure at the economic and social level"
23. What were the effects of the Vietnam War on the U.S. both at home and abroad? How was the global balance of power affected?
24. What motivated the Chinese invasion of Vietnam in 1979? What did it signify?
25. Why did it prove impossible to maintain the neutrality of Laos?
26. What were the consequences of the American War (1965-75) in Vietnam?
27. What impelled the Khmer Rouge massacre of its own population?
28. What were the effects of the Vietnam War on the U.S. both at home and abroad? How was the global balance of power affected?