

**INTRODUCTION TO LIBERAL STUDIES (MODULE 3):
THE UNITED STATES AND THE CHALLENGES OF VIETNAMESE NATIONALISM
Interdisciplinary Studies 8001**

Fall 2007
Tuesday ... 6:00 – 9:30
480 Humanities

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Course Description

This module will examine the role played by Vietnamese nationalism in confronting the French and, especially, the Americans. Too often, questions about why or how the United States “lost” the Vietnam war revolve around U.S.-centered explanations that do not account for the strength and persistence of Vietnamese revolutionary nationalism. The Americans, in other words, are said to have “lost” the war rather than the Vietnamese are said to have “won” it. This module will explore how Vietnamese viewed their struggle, why they persisted in their resistance to American power, and what this might suggest about the history of U.S. foreign relations more broadly. Each session will combine lecture and discussion, including the use of primary sources to facilitate active learning. I will occasionally use audio and video clips to illustrate important points.

Required Books

Marc Jason Gilbert, ed. *Why the North Won the Vietnam War*. New York: Palgrave, 2002.

Graham Greene. *The Quiet American*. London: Penguin, 2004 [1955].

Marilyn B. Young, John J. Fitzgerald, and A. Tom Grunfeld. *The Vietnam War: A History in Documents*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.

Course Requirements

1. Class Participation and Attendance. I expect you to have completed all of the weekly readings listed on the syllabus before the class meeting; I may call on you to answer questions or discuss pertinent points. Attendance is mandatory. If you are confused or concerned about any of the material, you are encouraged to speak with me during my office hours. If you cannot meet during my regular office hours, you may e-mail me to schedule an appointment at another time. For this portion of your final grade, half will be determined by your regular participation in discussing primary documents and other materials, and half will be determined by your in-class presentation on various chapters from *Why the North Won the Vietnam War*. (50 percent of final grade)

2. Final Paper. In this double-spaced five-page paper, you will be required to draw on at least six primary documents to answer the following question: Why did the Vietnamese revolutionaries “win” the war with the United States? The paper will be graded on how well you develop your thesis, how sufficiently you draw on direct evidence to support your argument, and how well you contextualize your use of that evidence, as well as by the paper’s style. The paper must use Chicago-style endnotes;

if you are unclear about when and how to cite sources, please see me. I have also placed a brief citation guide on the course website. The papers must be formatted using twelve-point Times or Times New Roman font and one-inch margins. As they will be graded on the basis of both content and style, it is imperative that the papers be well written and free of grammatical and spelling errors. If you are not a great writer, assistance is available at the Tutoring Center (40 Solon Campus Center; 218-726-6248). The paper must be turned in to Eleanor Hannah, the Module 4 instructor, on November 6; I will collect them from Professor Hannah. Late papers will not be accepted. (50 percent of final grade)

Special Arrangements

It is my goal to enable your full participation in the classroom and in my assignments. Any student with a documented disability condition (e.g., physical learning, psychiatric, vision, hearing) who needs to arrange reasonable accommodations must notify me and contact Disability Services and Resources (218-726-8217) at the beginning of the module.

Grading Policy

The following criteria will be used to determine students' grades:

- A ... Achievement outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.
- B ... Achievement significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements.
- C ... Achievement meeting the basic course requirements in every respect.
- D ... Achievement worthy of credit even though it does not fully meet the basic course requirements in every respect.
- F ... Performance failing to meet the basic course requirements.

Grades are based on a one hundred-point scale. I use the following scale in calculating grades:

- A ... 94 to 100
- A- ... 90 to 93.75
- B+ ... 87 to 89.75
- B ... 83 to 86.75
- B- ... 80 to 82.75
- C+ ... 77 to 79.75
- C ... 73 to 76.75
- C- ... 70 to 72.75
- D ... 67 to 69.75
- F ... 0 to 66.75

Students who engage in academic dishonesty will be given an “F” in this course and will be reported to the appropriate university authorities for further disciplinary action. According to the *New Student Guide 2007* [<http://www.d.umn.edu/~clasa/cla1001/SA/academicdishonesty.htm>] of the College of Liberal Arts, academic dishonesty includes plagiarism, fabrication, cheating, and academic misconduct. The college defines plagiarism as follows:

Plagiarism is the inclusion of someone else’s product, words, ideas, or data as one’s own work. When a student submits work for credit that includes the product, words, ideas, or data of others, the source must be acknowledged by the use of complete, accurate, and specific references. By placing one’s name on work submitted for credit, the student certifies the originality of all work not otherwise identified by appropriate acknowledgements. On written assignments, if verbatim statements are included, the statements must be enclosed by quotation marks or set off from regular text as indented extracts.

A student will avoid being charged with plagiarism if there is an acknowledgement of indebtedness. Indebtedness must be acknowledged whenever:

1. one quotes another person’s actual words or replicates all or part of another’s product;
2. one uses another person’s ideas, opinions, work, data, or theories, even if they are completely paraphrased in one’s own words;
3. one borrows facts, statistics, or other illustrative materials – unless the information is common knowledge.

Unauthorized collaboration with others on papers or projects can inadvertently lead to a charge of plagiarism. In addition, it is plagiarism to submit as your own any academic exercise (for example, written work, printing, computer program, art or design work, musical composition, and choreography) prepared totally or in part by another.

Plagiarism also includes submitting work in which portions were substantially produced by someone acting as a tutor or editor.

It is your responsibility to thoroughly familiarize yourself with the meaning of the other forms of academic dishonesty – which are defined at the CLA website cited above – and to avoid engaging in these practices at all costs.

Classroom Conduct

Students are expected to follow, and I will enforce, the University’s Student Conduct Code (<http://www.d.umn.edu/assl/conduct/code>). Appropriate classroom conduct promotes an environment of academic achievement and integrity. Disruptive classroom behavior that interrupts either my ability to teach or the ability of your peers to learn is prohibited. Such behavior includes, but is not limited to, reading the newspaper or books for other courses, talking to your classmates, and inappropriate use of technology in the classroom – from ringing cell phones and text-messaging to watching videos, playing computer games, doing email, or using the Internet instead of note-taking or other instructor-sanctioned activities.

Lecture and Reading Schedule

Note: Readings must be completed by the first class session of the week under which they appear. For example, the readings listed for week 1 must be completed by the class meeting on October 16.

Week 1. FRENCH COLONIALISM AND NATIONALIST RESISTANCE (October 16)

Reading

Greene, *The Quiet American*, vii-xxi, 3-180; Young, et al., *The Vietnam War*, 6-39

Week 2. CONSTRUCTING A THIRD FORCE: THE DIEM EXPERIMENT (October 23)

Reading

Gilbert, ed., *Why the North Won the Vietnam War*, xiii-xiv, 1-116; Young, et al., *The Vietnam War*, 40-115

Week 3. TOWARD THE DECENT INTERVAL (October 30)

Reading

Gilbert, ed., *Why the North Won the Vietnam War*, xiii-xiv, 117-240; Young, et al., *The Vietnam War*, 117-161

NOTE: I retain the right to revise or alter the syllabus at any time. I will notify you in class if changes are made.