History 4765-001
The Vietnam War
Spring, 2016

L. Ray Gunn
345 CTHB
Phone: 581-6798
Cell: (801) 244-3403
Office Hours: 1:00 – 2:00 MW and By Appointment
E-mail: ray.gunn@utah.edu

Course Description:

This course traces the history of the Vietnam War from its origins at the end of World War II to the reconciliation of Vietnam and the United States in the 1990s. Diplomatic and military developments will be examined in the context of the social, economic, and political history of North and South Vietnam and the United States, and, in a larger sense, from an international perspective. Topics will include a brief overview of the history of Vietnam to the nineteenth century, French colonialism and the emergence of Vietnamese nationalism and communism, the Vietnamese revolution and the defeat of the French in 1954, Vietnam and American Cold War policy, American intervention and military escalation under Presidents Kennedy and Johnson, the conduct and progress of the war and its impact on American society and politics, the anti-war movement, Nixon and American withdrawal, the fall of Saigon, the legacies of the war in the United States and Vietnam, and contemporary Vietnam and its prospects.

Required Texts:

Graham Greene, *The Quiet American*
William S. Turley, *The Second Indochina War*
Melvin Small, *Antiwarriors: The Vietnam War and the Battle for America's Hearts and Minds*
Larry Berman, *No Peace, No Honor*

Course Requirements:

Students are expected to attend all lectures, keep up in assigned reading, and, where appropriate, participate in class discussions. There will be two essay examinations in the course: a mid-term and a final. **The mid-term is tentatively scheduled for Friday, March 4. Should a change be necessary, the new date will be announced at least one week in advance. The final will be scheduled in**
accordance with the official University Final Exam Schedule: Tuesday, May 3, 10:30 – 12:30. Please take special note of the dates for exams and make whatever arrangements may be necessary (i.e., work schedules, etc.) to ensure that you are able to take the exams at the scheduled time. The exams will cover only the material relevant to that portion of the course. In other words, the final exam will not be comprehensive in nature. Study questions for the essay portion of the exams will be provided at least one week in advance.

Make-up exams will only be given for extraordinary circumstances. It is the student’s responsibility to be present for scheduled examinations. If there is a legitimate reason for missing the exam (health, family emergency, officially-excused University activity, etc.), the student should contact the instructor before hand if at all possible. In any event, all make-ups will be administered by the University Testing Center, which charges a $5 fee for that service.

In addition to the two exams, each student will be required to complete two outside assignments: (1) Read one memoir or novel of the Vietnam War, to be selected from a list provided by the instructor, and write a brief (3-4 page) review or reaction paper; (2) View one Vietnam War movie, to be selected from a list provided by the instructor, and write a brief (3-4 page) review or reaction paper. Your papers should address the principal themes of the book or film, relate those themes to the themes of the course, and critique the book or film in light of assigned readings, lectures, and class discussions. The papers are to be typed, double-spaced, stapled with a cover page, proofread, and grammatically correct. Papers are due on the date indicated on the syllabus. Late papers will be penalized one letter grade for each calendar day beyond the due date. Your papers should be presented in hard copy. I will not accept papers submitted electronically. You should always keep a copy for yourself.

Plagiarism will not be tolerated and will be dealt with in accordance with the University of Utah Student Code. Plagiarism is defined in the Student Code (Policy 6-400, Section I, B, 2, c as follows:

“Plagiarism” means the intentional unacknowledged use or incorporation of any other person's work in, or as a basis for, one's own work offered for academic consideration or credit or for public presentation. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, representing as one's own, without attribution, any other individual’s words, phrasing, ideas, sequence of ideas, information or any other mode or content of expression.

SPECIAL NOTE: War is by its very nature an extremely intense experience. Representations of the Vietnam War in the novels, memoirs, and films students are to choose from to complete the above assignments often contain explicit descriptions of violence and sexual situations and very strong language. Material of that nature is, however, integral to the Vietnam War experience. If you have problems dealing with such material, this may not be the class for you.
**Grading:** The final class grade will be determined as follows:

- Mid-Term Exam 1/3
- Average of Outside Assignments 1/3
- Final Exam 1/3

There will be no “extra credit assignments.” Apply yourself to the assigned work and “extra credit” will not be necessary.

The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in the class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Olpin Union Building, 581-5020 (V/TDD). CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations. All written information in this course can be made available in alternative format with prior notification to the Center for Disability Services.

### Weekly Topics and Reading Assignments

- **Week 1 (Jan. 11-15)**
  - Introduction and Background

- **Week 2 (Jan. 18-22)**
  - French Colonialism, Vietnamese Resistance
  - **Monday, Jan. 18**
    - Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Holiday
    - Turley, *The Second Indochina War*, xi-7
    - Greene, *The Quiet American* (Begin)

- **Week 3 (Jan. 25-29)**
  - The First Indochina War, 1945-1954
  - Turley, *The Second Indochina War*, 9-23
  - Greene, *The Quiet American* (Continue)

- **Week 4 Feb. 1-5**
  - Roots of American Involvement
  - **Friday, Feb. 5**
    - Discussion: Greene, *The Quiet American*

- **Week 5 (Feb. 8-12)**
  - A Divided Vietnam
Turley, *The Second Indochina War*, 25-56

Week 6 (Feb. 15-19)  America and the Search for Stability

Monday, Feb. 15  President's Day Holiday

Turley, *The Second Indochina War*, 57-91

Week 7 (Feb. 22-26)  The American Commitment Deepens

Turley, *The Second Indochina War*, 93-122

Week 8 (Feb. 29-Mar. 4)  The American Commitment Deepens II

Friday, Mar. 4  Mid-Term Examination

Week 9 (Mar. 7-11)  Diplomacy, Politics, and Polarization at Home

Turley, *The Second Indochina War*, 123-133
Small, *Antiwarriors* (Begin)

Friday, Mar. 11  Review of Memoir or Novel Due

Week 10 (Mar. 14-18)  Spring Break

Week 11 (Mar. 21-25)  Turning Point: Tet and Beyond

Turley, *The Second Indochina War*, 137-160
Small, *Antiwarriors* (Complete)

Week 12 (Mar. 28-Apr. 1)  Nixon and Kissinger's War

Turley, *The Second Indochina War*, 161-204
Appy, *Working Class War* (Begin)
Week 13 (Apr. 4-Apr. 8)  A Different Kind of War  

Friday, Apr. 8  Discussion: Appy, *Working Class War*.

Week 14 (Apr. 11-15)  The American Withdrawal  
Berman, *No Peace, No Honor*, 1-139  

Week 15 (Apr. 18-22)  The Fall of Saigon and Beyond  
Berman, *No Peace, No Honor*, 140-273

Week 16 (Apr. 25)  Legacies  
Turley, *The Second Indochina War*, 205-263

Mon., Apr. 25  Review of Film Due

Tuesday, May 3  Final Examination  
(10:30 – 12:30)
Vietnam War Films

Apocalypse Now (1979)
Born on the Fourth of July (1989)
The Boys in Company C (1978)
The Deer Hunter (1978)
First Blood (1982)
Full Metal Jacket (1987)
Go Tell the Spartans (1978)
The Green Berets (1968)
Hamburger Hill (1987)
Coming Home (1978)
Indochine (1992)
The Killing Fields (1984)
Platoon (1986)
The Fog of War (2003)
We Were Soldiers (2002)
Casualties of War (1989)

Personal Narratives, Memoirs, Oral Histories, Journalists’ Accounts, Novels

Mark Baker, Nam (1979)
C. D. B. Bryan, Friendly Fire (1976)
Phillip Caputo, A Rumor of War (1977)
Michael Herr, Dispatches (1978)
Ron Kovic, Born on the Fourth of July (1976)
Tim O’Brien, If I Die in a Combat Zone, Box Me Up and Ship Me Home (1973)
Tim O’Brien, Going After Cacciato (1981)
Tim O’Brien, The Things They Carried (1990)
Al Santoli, Everything They Had (1981)
Wallace Terry, Bloods (1982)
Larry Heinemann, Close Quarters (1977)
Larry Heinemann, Paco’s Story (1986)
James Webb, Fields of Fire (1978)
W. D. Ehrhart, Vietnam-Perkasie (1983)
Frederick Downs, The Killing Zone (1978)
Gustav Hasford, The Short Timers (1979)
John Ketwig, And a Hard Rain Fell (1986)