

## *Course Syllabus*

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### **Course Information**

HUHI 6320: The American Experience in Vietnam.  
Fall 2012.

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### **Professor Contact Information**

Stephen G. Rabe

[rabe@utdallas.edu](mailto:rabe@utdallas.edu)

972-883-2009.

Website: [http://www.utdallas.edu/ah/people/faculty\\_detail.php?faculty\\_id=891](http://www.utdallas.edu/ah/people/faculty_detail.php?faculty_id=891)

Office: JO 5.614.

Hours: MW 11:15-12 noon; M 5:45-6:45 p.m.; T 5:45-6:45 p.m.

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### **Course Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, and/or Other Restrictions**

None.

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### **Course Description**

This course will analyze the reaction and response of American society to the political and military defeat that the United States suffered at the hands of the North Vietnamese and their allies in the South, the Viet Cong. In pursuing this perception of defeat, we will examine the nature of the debate that has raged in scholarly, political, and military circles over why the United States was unable to achieve its objective of an independent, non-Communist South Vietnam. But we will also want to examine how Americans, bred on a history of success, interpret this defeat. As such, we will want to analyze how novelists, filmmakers, dramatists, poets, philosophers, musicians, media critics, anti-war activists, and veterans have attempted to explain Vietnam.

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### **Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes**

Through seminar discussions, readings, and written work, the student will improve their reading, writing, and speaking abilities. Students will also have a comprehensive understanding of the American experience in Vietnam.

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### **Required Textbooks and Materials**

Duong Van Mai Elliot, *The Sacred Willow*.  
Robert McMahon, ed. *Major Problems of the Vietnam War*. 4<sup>th</sup> ed.  
David Halberstam, *Ho*  
Graham Greene, *The Quiet American*.  
Philip Caputo, *A Rumor of War*.  
Michael Hunt, *Lyndon Johnson's War*.  
Stewart O'Nan, ed., *The Vietnam Reader*.  
Duong Thu Huong, *Novel Without a Name*.  
Camilla Gibb, *The Beauty of Humanity Movement*.

### **Suggested Course Materials**

None

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### **Assignments & Academic Calendar**

August 28

Vietnamese Nationalism

Documentary, *Vietnamese History*.

Elliot, pp. 3-156.

Halberstam, *Ho*, 3-61.

September 4

French Colonialism

Documentary, *Indo-China War, 1946-1954*

Elliot, pp. 157-272.

Halberstam, 62-104.

McMahon, Chapter 2 (6 documents; 2 essays)

September 11

U.S. and Vietnam, 1945-1961

Documentary, *America's Mandarin*

Halberstam, pp. 105-18.

Greene, *The Quiet American*

McMahon, Chapter 4 (7 documents; 3 essays).

September 18

U.S. and Vietnam, 1961-1965

Documentary, *Hearts and Minds*

Hunt, pp. 2-71.

Elliot, pp. 273-403.

September 25  
U.S. and Vietnam, 1965-1968  
Documentary, *Khe Sanh*  
Hunt, pp. 72-128.  
Caputo, *A Rumor of War*.

October 2  
Military Strategies  
Documentary, *With America's Enemy*  
McMahon, Chapter 7 (7 documents; 2 essays) & Chapter 9 (8 documents; 2 essays).

October 9  
Nixon's Plan for Peace, 1969-1973  
Documentary, *Return to My Lai*  
McMahon, Chapter 11 (10 documents; 2 essays)  
O'Nan, pp. 297-387.

October 16 (No Seminar)

October 23  
Veterans  
Play, *Medal of Honor Rag*  
O'Nan, pp. 81-106; 632-52.  
McMahon, Chapter 8 (8 documents; 2 essays).

October 30  
Antiwar Movement  
Documentary, *The War at Home*.  
McMahon, Chapter 12 (8 documents; 3 essays).

November 6  
Vietnam in Literature & Song  
O'Nan, pp. 11-80, 279-96, 427-38, 503-60, 593-612.

November 13  
Media and Vietnam  
Film, *Apocalypse Now* (portions).  
O'Nan, 389-426, 619-31, 653-73.

November 20 (No Seminar; Fall Break)

November 27  
Hollywood and Vietnam  
Film, *Hamburger Hill* (portions)  
O'Nan, pp. 257-78; 439-56.

December 4  
Lessons of Vietnam  
Documentary, *The Fog of War*  
Duong Thu Huong, *Novel Without a Name*  
Elliot, pp. 405-74.

December 11  
Contemporary Vietnam  
Documentary, *Regret to Inform*  
McMahon, Chapter 15 (6 documents; 3 essays).  
Gibb, *The Beauty of Humanity Movement*

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### **Grading Policy**

Faithful attendance at seminar sessions; vigorous and informed participation in seminar discussions; submission of a series (8-12) of short (1,000-1,250 words) papers based on assigned readings. Final grade will be based on instructor's evaluation of student's entire effort in class.

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### **Course & Instructor Policies**

Class attendance is essential and critical to good academic performance in a graduate seminar. Students must also complete each reading assignment on time in order to facilitate seminar discussions.

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University policy on classes can be found at:

<http://provost.utdallas.edu/home/syllabus-policies-and-procedures-text>