You can kill ten of my men for each one I kill of yours, but even at those odds, you will lose and I will win. Vietnamese leader Ho Chi Minh, to the French, late 1940s

You have a row of dominoes set up; you knock over the first one, and what will happen to the last one is that it will go over very quickly. President Dwight David Eisenhower, 1954

Now we have a problem in making our power credible, and Vietnam is the place. President John F. Kennedy, 1961

We are not about to send American boys nine or ten thousand miles away from home to do what Asian boys ought to be doing for themselves. President Lyndon B. Johnson, 1964

I'm not going to be the first American president to lose a war. President Richard M. Nixon, 1969

Today, America can regain the sense of pride that existed before Vietnam. These events, tragic as they are, portend neither the end of the world nor of America's leadership in the world. President Gerald Ford, 1975

Some critics viewed Vietnam as a morality play, in which the wicked must be punished before the final curtain, and where any attempt to salvage self-respect from the outcome compounded the wrong. I viewed it as a genuine tragedy. No one had a monopoly on anguish. Former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, 1979

It's time that we recognized that ours was, in truth, a noble cause. Presidential Candidate Ronald Reagan, 1980

No event in American history is more misunderstood than the Vietnam War. It was misreported then, and it is misremembered now. Former President Richard Nixon, 1985

COURSE DESCRIPTION
America’s lengthy war in Vietnam was--by most accounts--its most divisive. As U.S. troop levels swelled to more than a half million by 1968, American society split sharply over the legitimacy and efficacy of the war effort. The war’s inconclusiveness and unpopularity spawned not only a broad-based antiwar movement, but also a reexamination of America’s purpose as wrenching as any other since before or after the grueling Civil War. Neither Richard Nixon’s 1969 decision to ultimately eliminate U.S. ground forces, nor the 1975 fall of Saigon did much to resolve the debate or to ease the traumas that it unleashed. Our class explores the larger boundaries of that debate by focusing on questions such as: Why did America intervene in Vietnam; what did America seek to accomplish there? Were these goals attainable?
What domestic events played out; often resulting in lasting and compelling change? Who were America’s enemies? Allies? Can U.S. actions there be characterized as moral—or immoral? How did an unindustrialized, rural region ultimately dominate the world’s leading authority? Much reading and even more discussion will allow us to travel back and re-live this conflict and its ascendant chaos, perhaps with new-found appreciation for Vietnam’s American legacy.

**COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

After completing this course, a successful student will be able to:

- Develop the critical thinking skills for (1) reading, analyzing, and interpreting readings and (2) articulating and defending one’s positions in writing, in-class discussions, and oral presentations.
- Participate in class discussions while respecting the views of others.
- Relate the seminar topic to the AUCC categories in Arts/Humanities, Social/Behavioral Sciences, Historical Perspectives, and Global & Cultural Awareness.
- Have a greater appreciation of diversity and conflict in the seminar topic.
- Discuss societal beliefs about the Vietnam War.
- Describe the ways in which time, place, culture, and identity affect government decisions.
- Recognize global issues related to America’s Vietnam era.
- Identify their own perspectives about war, and how those are shaped by personal identity, context, and history.
- Critique current and historical research on American activities relating to Vietnam, foreign and domestic.
- Discuss cross-cultural views between East and West.

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**


Karnow, S. *Vietnam: A History* (any edition). We are reading in its entirety.

**CANVAS PLATFORM**

Class materials, homework assignments, discussion assignments, oral presentation, research paper, grades, and other information critical to your success in this course are located on Canvas. You can access Canvas for this course at: http://info.canvas.colostate.edu/login.aspx.

**COURSE SCHEDULE: TOPICS, READINGS, AND OTHER MATERIALS**

**Week #1**

- Introductions & Explanations
- Determine presentation dates, address questions, review MLA
- Writing samples at class
- Honor pledge
- Field Trip (by foot, on campus)
- PICC as a class, at class

**Week #2**

- Chapter 1 “The War Nobody Won”
- Chapter 2 “Piety and Power”

**Week #3**

- Chapter 3 “The Heritage of Vietnamese nationalism”
- Chapter 4 “The War with the French”
- PICC self-evaluation completed by today

**Week #4**

- Chapter 5 “The Light that Failed”
- Chapter 6 “America’s Mandarin”
- Writing #1 due

**Week #5**

- Chapter 7 “Vietnam is the Place”
- Chapter 8 “The End of Diem”

**Week #6**

- Chapter 9 “The Commitments Deepen”
- Chapter 10 “Disorder and Decision”

**Week #7**

- Chapter 11 “LBJ Goes to War”
- Chapter 12 “Escalation”
Week #8  Chapter 13 “Debate, Diplomacy, Doubt”
          Address Paper considerations—review writing expectations
          Writing Project #2
Week #9  Chapter 14 “TET”
          Chapter 15 “Nixon’s War”
          Argumentative Paper Version
Week #10 Chapter 16 “The Peace That Never Was”
          Discuss FSO expectations, address questions
Week #11 Maya Lin: A Strong Clear Vision
          Special Guest Speaker
Week #12 Presentation procedure reviewed/topics confirmed
          On-campus Filed Trip
          Full Sentence Outline peer review
Week #13 Presentations
Week #14 Presentations
Week #15 Presentations (if needed); on-campus Field Trip; Wrap-up; Evaluations
Finals Week Argumentative Paper due, polished and Perfected Version #2

ASSIGNMENTS

Class Participation
Attendance is mandatory. Any absences must have prior approval by the instructor; unexcused absences receive 0 points for that time period. Participation is graded according to the criteria in the Participation Rubric over seven 2-week intervals (Weeks 1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8, 9-10, 11-12, and 13-14). Honors competencies self-assessment. Honors seminars are intended to assist student competencies in critical thinking; creativity and problem solving; interdisciplinary learning integrated with global &/or cultural viewpoints and professionalism, interpersonal skills, & emotional intelligence. The assignment is due at the end of Week 4. Students must include comments for all four categories for full credit.

This assignment addresses the University Honors Program competencies of critical thinking and professionalism, interpersonal skills, & emotional intelligence.

Discussion assignments
Students are divided into smaller discussion groups. Each student submits or shares a post on the Discussion board and/or at class based on the prompt and responds to a posting from one other student in the discussion group.

This assignment addresses the University Honors Program competencies of critical thinking; creativity and problem solving; and professionalism, interpersonal skills, & emotional intelligence.

Oral Presentation
Students give an extemporaneous persuasive speech 7-8 minutes in length. The purpose of the speech is to persuade, not inform. Speeches must flow logically and be evidence-driven. A full sentence outline with complete bibliography is required. Instructions and examples on Canvas. Peer Evaluation. Each student is evaluated by other students. Canvas and/or instructor will randomly assign students to evaluate. You are to complete the grading rubric provided by the due date. The scores from the peer reviews will be included in the oral presentation grade.

This assignment addresses the University Honors Program competencies of critical thinking; interdisciplinary learning integrated with global &/or cultural viewpoints; and professionalism, interpersonal skills, & emotional intelligence.

Writing Assignments/Research Paper general guidelines
- Students prepare a summary based on posted prompts, course content, and reading materials. The assignments are uploaded on Canvas and/or submitted at class by the due date.
- bibliography
- MLA format
Sources required: 4 Primary; 4 Secondary
Include all 8 in your paper’s content, with MLA citations

Overview: By semester’s end, plan to submit an academically inspired argumentative paper that showcases not only an excellent grasp of the material covered, but also your writing proficiency, and your ability to conduct and coherently apply research pertinent to your topic. Your final paper will represent a polished work that shows attention to both detail and form.

Expectations: There should be no spelling errors or grammatical mistakes. While you are not expected to hand-in a flawless paper at this point in your academic journey, you are expected to have spent enough time on the project to submit an excellent paper. Disorganized, weakly argued, or polemical pieces will not receive rewarding scores. You should include relevant quotes and figures and, absolutely, cite them correctly. This paper will include your completed research (correctly cited), have a concise and intelligible thesis that is well supported, have one or more clear objections brought up and dealt with, and a conclusion that can be logically followed from the body of the paper. The purpose of the writing project is to produce a final product that can withstand academic criticism, a paper you can be proud of and expand into an impressive writing sample.

Argumentative Papers: The basic structure that you are expected to adhere to is this: present a position that you feel is well-supported and, using sound academic sources, show why this position is strong. It is important to realize going in that your objective is to demonstrate the strength of a perspective, not persuade the reader to adopt that perspective. Persuasion implies an intangible goal of influencing the opinions of a variety of potential readers, and does not have to reflect good argumentation or research (as many political commentators demonstrate daily). A worthy argumentative paper provides the reasoning and facts behind supporting a position without pushing the reader to that viewpoint (though a rational and well thought out position should be attractive to open-minded readers). Your paper should spend time establishing exactly what the scope of your argument is—what the topic is, how it applies to the world—this is where it is important to have much-researched your topic. Without a cogent thesis your paper will not get off the ground.

Like sound arguments, sound argumentative papers need to stay focused on the topic.
In delineating your argument, cite experts that support your assertions.
You should be careful to fully explain each aspect of your paper: not only what your argument is, but why it is important (why did you choose this argument over others?).
Once you have laid out your argument's borders and strengths you should then present one or more real objections to your position. I emphasize that these should be real objections insofar as they are not easily dismissed.
What you need to be careful of: is the introduction of the objection simply motivated by trying to make your own argument look better? (No straw man arguments.)
Once you have established resistance to your argument you can show why your assertions defeat or sidestep the objections (if they do).
You should clearly and concisely offer rebuttal to these objections while remaining assertive instead of persuasive in tone. This should lead you to the conclusion of your paper, showing how your thesis has been established and defended throughout the work.
Your paper should spend time establishing exactly what the scope of your argument is, what the topic is and how it applies to the world—this is where it is important to have undertaken research. Without a cogent thesis, your paper will not go well, so please confirm that you have a topic that can be summarized quickly and clearly.
• Do not simply restate your thesis as a conclusion. In the end this is about showing why your assertions are logically superior to the alternative positions, this is not a polemic, not an op-ed, and not the place for broad topics that meander in and out of relevance.
• Sources—4 primary, 4 secondary.
• These 8 required sources must be represented in the body of your paper via citations.
• Point deductions double for FSO ‘repeat offensives.’
• Due date: TBA—discussed at class.

This assignment addresses the University Honors Program competencies of critical thinking; creativity and problem solving; and interdisciplinary learning integrated with global &/or cultural viewpoints.

Analytical Argumentative Paper
Research paper (8-10 pages or 2500 words plus references) on a topic that analyzes, interprets, and evaluates an aspect of the course content. The topic may be based on the oral presentation, or it may be on a different topic. A proposal for the paper is due at the end of Week 7.

Argumentative Paper
Grading Rubric
1. Thesis Statement—Your Argument /20
Clear consistent use of an organized topic sentence clearly stated in introduction and throughout paper. Each paragraph must reference argument.

2. Mechanics--point deductions double for FSO ‘repeat offensives’ /20
Adhere to all current MLA writing guidelines and proofread.

3. Sources /20
Demonstrate throughout the paper that you have consulted and included the requisite number of both primary and secondary sources. Proper citations are a must.

4. Evidence /20
Evidence = facts that you have found while researching your topic. Proper nouns, statistics, and anything considered quantifiable is considered evidence.

5. Counter-argument /10
A sound, supported counter-argument distinguishes an outstanding paper from a good one. Be sure to fully explain why the counter-argument is ultimately invalid. Include at least one source.

6. Overall Presentation /10
For example: solely in black ink, no underlining, uniform academic-sized font throughout.

Total Score /100

This assignment addresses the University Honors Program competencies of critical thinking and interdisciplinary learning integrated with global &/or cultural viewpoints.

EVALUATION SYSTEM

The assignments that are used to evaluate student learning are:
1. Discussion question assignments. Weekly writing assignment on readings.
2. Writing assignments can be in the form of a traditional academic essay, personal essay, creative nonfiction, fiction, poetry, or art/design project with narrative.
3. Formal persuasive speech. A 7 to 8-minute extemporaneous informative speech to the class related to content.
4. Final argumentative paper.
5. Participation. This includes the PICC self-assessment.

GRADING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Seminar Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
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<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion assignments</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Writing projects</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final argumentative paper</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Formal speech with FSO</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
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Grade distribution (plus/minus grades may be used):

- 90-100% A
- 80-89% B
- 70-79% C
- 60-69% D
- <60% F

Incomplete

The grade of “I” is a temporary grade awarded to indicate that for reasons beyond the student’s control or that the student could not have reasonably have anticipated, he/she could not complete the requirements for the course. When an instructor assigns an “I,” he/she shall specify in writing the requirements the student shall fulfill to complete the course. After one year, or at the end of the semester in which the student graduates (whichever comes first), an “incomplete” will automatically change to an “F” grade unless the course has been completed and the grade change submitted. The student must be in good academic standing in the class in order to receive an incomplete. (CSU Faculty Council policy)

Late Assignments Policy

All assignments are due in class on the date due. Late assignments are not accepted unless there are documented circumstances or situations where arrangements have been made in advance.

Resources

The CSU Writing Center is an excellent resource to support the development of your writing skills throughout your college career. While students are not required to access services, you are strongly encouraged to seek consultation on your writing projects required for this course. In addition to contact information, there are useful resources available on their website: [http://writing.colostate.edu/](http://writing.colostate.edu/).

The Morgan Library reference librarians can direct you to books and articles for the research paper and the oral presentation. Contact Rob Sica, Social Sciences and Humanities Liaison, Morgan Library 154, rob.sica@colostate.edu, 970.491.1047.

Attendance Policy

If you are ill or unable to attend class, you must contact the instructor in advance. It is your responsibility to contact a classmate to get information discussed in class. It is good practice to always have the phone number and email address of at least two students in your class. You can request this information from classmates and write it below.

Accommodations for disabilities

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 requires Colorado State University to provide academic adjustments or accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Students seeking academic adjustment or accommodations must self-identify with the Office of Resources for Disabled Students (ORDS). You may call for an appointment at: 491-6385 or visit 100 General Services Building. After meeting with ORDS staff, and based on their recommendations, students are encouraged to meet with their instructors to discuss their needs, and if applicable, any lab safety concerns related to their disabilities.

Academic and Professional Honesty Policy

This course adheres to the Academic Integrity Policy of the Colorado State University General Catalog and the Student Conduct Code. Honors students enrolled in this course are held to high standards of integrity. Academic integrity is expected within all assignments for this course. Students will be required to make an honor pledge to complete this course. The honors pledge will be completed as a class, at class. For more information about academic integrity, please visit: [http://learning.colostate.edu/integrity/](http://learning.colostate.edu/integrity/). It is expected that students will use their own knowledge and skill
for assignments unless directed to do otherwise. Incidents of cheating, plagiarism or knowingly providing false or incorrect information are considered serious and will be treated seriously. Consequences of these incidents are at the discretion of the faculty member involved and may consist of confiscation of assignments, an ‘F’ grade, or reporting to the CSU Student Conduct office. It is expected that students will demonstrate concern for others, respect the confidentiality of information about, the property of and decisions made by others.

Reporting student disclosures of interpersonal violence
CSU’s Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Stalking, and Retaliation policy designates faculty and employees of the University as “Responsible Employees” (https://oeo.colostate.edu/title-ix-sexual-assault-sexual-violence-sexual-harassment/). This designation is consistent with federal law and guidance, and requires faculty to report information regarding students who may have experienced any form of sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, relationship violence, stalking or retaliation. This includes information shared with faculty in person, electronic communications or in class assignments. As “Responsible Employees,” faculty may refer students to campus resources (see below), together with informing the Office of Support and Safety Assessment to help ensure student safety and welfare. Information regarding sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, relationship violence, stalking and retaliation is treated with the greatest degree of confidentiality possible while also ensuring student and campus safety.

- Any student who may be the victim of sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, relationship violence, stalking or retaliation is encouraged to report to CSU through one or more of the following resources:
  - Emergency Response 911
  - Deputy Title IX Coordinator/Office of Support and Safety Assessment (970) 491-1350
  - Colorado State University Police Department (non-emergency) (970) 491-6425

Competencies for Honors Students Exercise (“PICC” feedback)
The CSU University Honors Program has identified four general competencies that should be incorporated in each Honors seminar. These skills include (1) Professionalism, interpersonal skills, and emotional intelligence; (2) Interdisciplinary learning integrated with global and/or cultural viewpoints; (3) Critical thinking; and (4) Creativity and problem solving. This is a two-stage process. First, students complete a self-evaluation of these skills at the beginning of the semester. Second, at the end of the semester instructors will provide feedback for each student, based on assignments and activities. The feedback is part of the University Honors Program; it is for advising purposes only and is confidential. It is not part of a student’s grades or academic record. A standardized rubric is used to provide feedback for growth in these areas and to measure the Honors Programs progress in helping students to develop these skills through their academic career. The feedback categories and activities/assignments used to evaluate students are listed below and noted in the assignment descriptions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill Category (PICC)</th>
<th>Relevant Course Activities &amp; Assignments</th>
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</table>
| **1. Professionalism, interpersonal skills, & emotional intelligence:** Acts ethically & positively to foster a supportive instructional or work environment. Has the emotional intelligence (ability to perceive, evaluate, & manage emotions) & interpersonal skills to work effectively with others. | • Class participation & conduct  
• Discussion question assignments  
• Formal speech |
| **2. Interdisciplinary learning integrated with global & cultural viewpoints:** Integrates diverse knowledge, perspectives, &/or skills into arguments &/or strategies; is | • Class discussions  
• Discussion question assignments  
• Writing projects |
aware of and can clearly incorporate global &/or cultural perspectives to an argument or issue.

- Final research paper
- Formal speech

3. Critical thinking: Student advances a position with specific theses or hypotheses & can conceptualize ideas or lines of thought. Conclusions and related outcomes acknowledge complexities of an issue (implications and consequences) and recognize differing points of view. Formulates & develops claims with sufficient support, including reasoning, evidence, & persuasive appeals, & proper attribution where necessary. Uses written and oral communication effectively in persuasive arguments.

- Class discussions
- Discussion question assignments
- Writing projects
- Final research paper
- Formal speech

4. Creativity & problem solving: Creatively applies discipline-based and/or cross-discipline-based knowledge to discover and design a variety of forms often using a problem-solving strategy

- Class discussions
- Discussion question assignments
- Writing projects
- Final research paper
- Formal speech

Instructions for completing the student self-evaluation using online PICC form:
1. Click this link, or go to honors.colostate.edu/picc in your web browser.
2. Log in with your eName and password.
3. Click on the blue “Create New” button at the top of the page to bring up the PICC Entry Form.
4. At the top of this new page is a link to the full PICC rubric, which you should review before completing the form.
5. The Assessment Type, Student, and Semester fields should be filled in for you.
6. Choose your instructor from the drop down menu.
7. Choose the course for which you are filling out this evaluation from the drop down menu.
8. Choose the level (B, D, P, and M, for basic, developing, proficient, and mature, respectively) for each of the four skill categories. Note that comments justifying why you chose this level are required.
9. If you have any general comments, add them to the general comments field. This field is optional.
10. Once you have checked to ensure the form is correct, click the ‘Submit’ button. All done!

If you have any questions or technical problems, email Honors Tech Support at honorstechsupport@colostate.edu