Spring 2013 Syllabus

INR 4225.0001 The Vietnam War

Dr. Paul Vasquez, Department of Political Science

Class time & place: MWF 10:30 – 11:20 AM**,** Psychology Bldg. Room 106

Credit hours: 3

Office Hours: Monday & Wednesday 12:30-3:30 PM,
Thursdays 1:00-3:00 PM & by appointment

Contact information: paul.vasquez@ucf.edu / (407) 823-3329

Instructor's office: 305B Howard Phillips (PH) Hall in the main Poli Sci suite

Course Description: Our study of the Vietnam War will provide insights about not only military matters related to the American involvement in Southeast Asia during the last century, but also earlier French involvement. Additionally, we will study how the pursuit of American security interests in Indochina was influenced by international and domestic politics, as well as the way in which the war in turn influenced international and domestic politics.

Prerequisite: POS 2041, INR 2002, or consent of the instructor

Required materials: Required materials for this course include the following text:

James S. Olson and Randy Roberts. 2008. *Where the Domino Fell: America and Vietnam* 1945-1995. Revised 5th edition. New York: Wiley-Blackwell.

Also, you will be given access to several articles and book chapters over the course of the semester. Expect more details to follow on how to access those materials.

Course goals: In terms of substance, this course is designed to give students a better understanding of: 1) historical and factual aspects of the Vietnam War; 2) the relevance of major theoretical perspectives from political science to the Vietnam War; and 3) the relevance of the Vietnam War to subsequent political events and processes. With regards to skill development, students will have the opportunity to demonstrate their capacity 4) to use databases for research purposes and 5) to improve their writing ability.

Requirements: I will evaluate your performance in this class in accord with the table below.

A	B	C	D	E
Assignments	**% of Final Grade**	**Assignment average (add grades for each row & ÷ by the # of grades for this task)**	**Component Score = column B x column C**	**Due Date**
Quizzes	15			To be announced
Exam 1	20			Monday, Feb. 11
Exam 2	20			Friday, March 22
Writing Improvement Exercise	5			Friday, April 12
Paper	15			Wednesday, April 17
Final Exam	25			Monday, April 29 @ 10:00 AM
Total	100%	**Add Column D to estimate final grade →**		

Assignments

Quizzes: Quizzes may cover any material from the class, including, but not limited to lectures, readings, or films. Some quizzes will be announced in advance and other evaluations will be pop quizzes. In addition to traditional, individually taken quizzes, some quizzes will be taken in small groups to allow for collaboration and discussion. These team quizzes will include questions with more than one correct answer for a question or questions, and you will be graded on your ability to identify all of the correct answers on those quizzes. On these team quizzes you will be aided by knowing the total number of correct answers for the assignment. The lowest quiz grade for each student will be dropped when calculating final course grades.

Exam 1, Exam 2 and the Final Exam: These will be multiple choice exams with each question having only one correct answer. However, only the final exam will be cumulative, as it will cover material covered on the first two exams, as well as the material covered after Exam 2. **Warning:** Do not assume that these exams will be easy simply because they will take the form of a multiple choice exam.

Writing Improvement Exercise: After covering some issues regarding writing in class, you will review and correct a piece of very poor, error-filled writing.

Short writing assignment: For this assignment paper (8-10 pages maximum), you will summarize and discuss 3 articles or book chapters on the Vietnam War **not** covered in class and explain how the findings of those authors 1) support information covered in class, 2) contradict the findings of works covered in class, or 3) offer new insights that don't really support or contradict material covered in class. Relevant materials covered in course readings should be referenced and discussed as appropriate. Referenced materials should be included in a bibliography or works cited page.

Please note that mechanical elements of writing including, but not limited to proper spelling, grammar, punctuation, etc. are all important components of formal writing such as a college paper. Exceptionally poor performance in this regard could lower your paper grade by as much as 20 points, so take steps to avoid this eventuality. Papers should use 12-point font, double-spacing and 1 inch margins.

The paper will be graded in accord with the following distribution of credit.

Mechanics of writing	20%
Application of concepts	30%
Clear and logical analysis	30%
Organization of paper	20%
	100%

Grades scale for course assignments

The grading scale for this course is listed below. For more details on the evaluation criteria, see the specific tasks listed under Course Requirements.

Letter Grade Points	
A = 93 – 100 points	C = 73 – 76 points
A-= 90 – 92 points	C-= 70 – 72 points
B+= 87 – 89 points	D+= 67 – 69 points
B = 83 – 86 points	D = 63 – 66 points
B- =80 – 82 points	D- = 60 – 62 points
C+=77 – 79 points	F = 59 and below

Late work/ Make-up Exams: Unless otherwise specified, out-of-class assignments are due at the beginning of class on the dates listed below. Late assignments will be penalized 10% for each full calendar day they are late, up to as much as 30%, unless a compelling and honest explanation is offered. Make-up exams may be given if they are missed for compelling, honest, and unexpected reasons. However, students making up exams must take them within the week unless health problems keep them from coming to campus. Students making up exams will not be given the same exam that was originally administered. Missed quizzes may not be made up, unless they are for an officially excused University function, but keep in mind that your lowest quiz grade will be dropped.

Important Advice: You should attend class each day to internalize lecture material and participate in other classroom activities as they come along. As you attempt to internalize the course content, you should come to class having read the material assigned for that day. You should be prepared to be quizzed over any course readings by the day for which that material is assigned. Points covered only in lecture are fair game for quizzing once they have been mentioned in class. Take notes when you read and attend class lectures. Doing so will set you up to succeed on quizzes and exams. **Read this syllabus and assignments carefully to put yourself in position to succeed.**

Academic Support Services

Student Academic Resource Center (SARC) (Phillips Hall, Room 113/ (407) 823-5130): If you have trouble succeeding in this class and comprehending the material, you might benefit from contacting this office for assistance with improving your study skills.

University Writing Center (UWC) (MOD 608/ (407) 823-2197)**:** The Center is free for all UCF students. At the UWC, a writing consultant can work with you on anything you are writing, whether it is brainstorming or editing. While recommended, appointments are not required.

UCF Counseling Center (Building #27/ (407) 823-2811): Students experiencing formidable mental health challenges, including, but by no means limited to stress, anxiety, or depression, that are hindering their ability to be the best they can be should contact this office for help.

Students with Disabilities (Ferrell Commons, Room 132/ phone (407) 823-2371): Students with disabilities that need special accommodations regarding class attendance or assignments should have proof of their disability on file with Student Disability Services They should also inform the instructor of their status within the first day of class or once they become aware of it, should such realization occur during the course of a semester.

Behavior

"To educate a man in mind and not in morals is to educate a menace to society." President Theodore Roosevelt.

Disruptions: If circumstances require you to arrive late for class, please do so in as discreet a manner as possible. Please try to limit distracting noises in class (for example, whispering, cell phones, etc.) as much as possible. Such behavior bothers others who are paying good money to learn and it may be distracting to me as I attempt to do my job. Students should refrain from using laptops or other electrical devices in class.

Cheating: **Do not cheat** as this clearly violates the Golden Rule Student Handbook and violates several aspects of the UCF Creed. Unless otherwise specified by the instructor (such as on team quizzes), your work must be your own. Cheating can come in many forms, including plagiarism. Plagiarism is when writers use other people's words or ideas and do not give them credit. Use

footnotes or endnotes to give credit for direct quotes, paraphrased quotes, or borrowed ideas. I strongly recommend that everyone take the UCF Online Information Literacy tutorial "Avoiding Plagarism" prior to beginning the short paper so that you will be clear about my expectations of you. I will send out a link to this tutorial during the semester. Feel free to discuss readings and ideas with fellow students, but if you use their ideas, please reference them accordingly. If you don't know what footnotes or endnotes are, please ask me. Do not quote or paraphrase without giving credit in footnotes or endnotes. Do not copy or use papers or sections of papers from the web or other sources. I assume that all students in this class could write a better term paper than the junk sold on the Internet and will not resort to such dubious sources for their assignments. In the event that I suspect a paper of being plagiarized, I will use Turnitin.com to help with that determination.

If I determine that there has been any instance of academic dishonesty in the course, I will inform you of my concern and report the violation to Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities. At the end of the semester, a letter grade of Z, indicating academic dishonesty, will precede the letter grade earned. For more information about the Z grades and the process for appealing such a finding, please consult the following website: http://integrity.sdes.ucf.edu/zgrade .

Assignments on which cheating occurs will be penalized with an F (0 points) and the weight of that assignment when factored into the final grade will be increased two-fold. For example, cheating by plagiarizing a portion of the short writing assignment and bibliography would mean that the zero on the assignment would count for 30% of your final grade instead of just 15%.

Class Schedule

Monday, January 7 **Welcome and introduction**

Wednesday, January 9 **Historical Springboard**

Chapter 1: Eternal War: The Vietnamese Heritage from *Where the Domino Fell*

Friday, January 11

Chapter 2: The First Indochina War, 1945-1954 from *Where the Domino Fell*

Monday, January 14

Chapter 3: The Making of a Quagmire, 1954-1960 from *Where the Domino Fell*

Wednesday, January 16

Chapter 4: The New Frontier in Vietnam, 1961-1963 from *Where the Domino Fell*

Friday, January 18

Chapter 5: Planning a Tragedy, 1963-1965 from *Where the Domino Fell*

Monday, January 21 *****Dr. MLK, Jr. Holiday****

Wednesday, January 23

Chapter 6: Into the Abyss, 1965-1966 from *Where the Domino Fell*

Friday, January 25

Chapter 7: The Mirage of Progress, 1966-1967 from *Where the Domino Fell*

Monday, January 28

Chapter 8: Tet and the Year of the Monkey, 1968 from *Where the Domino Fell*

Wednesday, January 30

Chapter 9: The Beginning of the End, 1969-1970 from *Where the Domino Fell*

Friday, February 1

Chapter 10: The Fall of South Vietnam, 1970-1975 from *Where the Domino Fell*

Monday, February 4

Chapter 11: Distorted Images, Missed Opportunities, 1975-1990 from *Where the Domino Fell*

Wednesday, February 6

Chapter 12: Oliver Stone's Vietnam from *Where the Domino Fell*

Friday, February 8 **Personal Reflections on Vietnam**

Christian Appy. 2003. "War Heroes." In *Patriots: The Vietnam War Remembered From All Sides.* New York: Viking: 12-19.

Monday, February 11 **Exam 1**

Wednesday, February 13 **Insurgent strategies and popular support**

James W. Pohl. 1974. "The American Revolution and the Vietnamese War: Pertinent Military Analogies." *The History Teacher.* February. (Vol. 7, No. 2): 255-265.

John M. Gates. 1990. "People's War in Vietnam." *The Journal of Military History*. July (Vol. 54, No. 3): 325-344.

Friday, February 15

Andrew Mack. 1975. "Why Big Nations Lose Small Wars: The Politics of Asymmetric Conflict." *World Politics*. (Vol. 27, No. 2): 175-200.

Monday, February 18 **Organization and Unity**

Will H. Moore. 1995. "Rational Rebels: Overcoming the Free-Rider Problem." *Political Research Quarterly*. June (Vol. 48, No. 2): 417-454.

Wednesday, February 20

Robert Maranto and Paula S. Tuchman. 1992. "Knowing the Rational Peasant: The Creation of Rival Incentive Structures in Vietnam." *Journal of Peace Research*. (Vol. 29, No. 3): 249-264

Friday, February 22

Andrew Mack. 1975. "Why Big Nations Lose Small Wars: The Politics of Asymmetric Conflict." *World Politics*. (Vol. 27, No. 2): 175-200.

Monday, February 25 **Movie:** *Path to War*

Wednesday, February 27 *Path to War* (continued)

Friday, March 1 *Path to War* (continued)

March 3 – March 8 **Spring Break**

Monday, March 11 **The Vietnam War and Realist Theory**

Ellen Glaser Rafshoon. 2001. "A Realist's Moral Opposition to War: Hans Morgenthau and Vietnam." *Peace & Change*. 26 (1), 55-77.

Randall Schweller. "Bandwagoning For Profit: Bringing The Revisionist State Back In," *International Security*, Vol. 19, No. 1 (Summer 1994).

Wednesday, March 13 **The Vietnam War and World Systems Theory**

Paul R. Viotti and Mark V. Kauppi. 2012. "Economic Structuralism: Global Capitalism and Postcolonialism." Chapter 4. In Paul R. Viotti and Mark V. Kauppi, eds. 5th edition. *International Relations Theory*: 189-207.

Friday, March 15 **The Vietnam War and Bureaucratic Organizations**

Jonathan D. Caverley. 2009-2010. "The Myth of Military Myopia: Democracy, Small Wars, and Vietnam." *International Security*. Vol. 34, No. 3 (Winter): 119-157.

Monday, March 18

James J. Wirtz. Intelligence to Please? The Order of Battle Controversy during the Vietnam War. Chapter 15. From Loch K. Johnson and James J. Wirtz. 2008. *Intelligence and National Security: The Secret World of Spies*. 2nd Edition. New York: Oxford University Press.

Wednesday, March 20

Deborah D. Avant. 1993. "The Institutional Sources of Military Doctrine: Hegemons in Peripheral Wars**."** *International Studies Quarterly*. December (Vol. 37, No. 4): 409-430.

Friday, March 22 **Exam 2**

Monday, March 25 **Military Casualties and Public Opinion**

A selection from John E. Mueller. *War, Presidents and Public Opinion*. (John Wiley & Sons, Inc: New York, 1973).

Wednesday, March 27

A selection from Christopher Gelpi, Peter D. Feaver & Jason Reifler. 2009. *Paying the Human Costs of War: American Public Opinion and Casualties in Military Conflicts*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Friday, March 29 **Military Manpower, War Resistance and Public Opinion**

Gil Merom. 2003. A chapter from How Democracies Loose Small Wars: State, Society, and Failures of France in Algeria, Israel in Lebanon, and the United States in Vietnam. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 229-250.

Monday, April 1

A selection from Douglas L. Kriner and Francis X. Shen. 2010. The Casualty Gap: The Causes and Consequences of American Wartime Inequalities. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Wednesday, April 3

Robert S. Erikson and Laura Stoker. 2011. "Caught in the Draft: The Effects of Vietnam Draft Lottery Status on Political Attitudes." American Political Science Review Vol. 105, No. 2 (May): 221-237.

Friday, April 5 **Comparing Vietnam and Iraq: Similarities and Differences**

Stephen Biddle. 2006. "Seeing Baghdad, Thinking Saigon." *Foreign Affairs.* March/ April (Vol. 85 Issue 2): 2-14.

Monday, April 8

Jeffery Record and Andrew Terrill. 2004. *Iraq and Vietnam: Differences, Similarities, and Insights.* Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute of the U.S. Army War College. 1-69.

Wednesday, April 10 **Movie**: *Born on the Fourth of July*

Friday, April 12 **Writing Improvement Exercise Due**

Born on the Fourth of July (continued)

Monday, April 15 *Born on the Fourth of July (continued)*

Wednesday, April 17	Lecture, **Papers Due**
Friday, April 19	Lecture
Monday, April 21	Last class day
Monday, April 29	**Final Exam** from 10:00 AM - 12:50 PM