Objectives:
This course provides students with an overview of modern Vietnamese history and the Vietnam War. From the lectures, discussions, and readings, students are expected to gain an understanding of:
1. The importance of “indigenous variables” in the outcome of “small wars.”
2. The history of Vietnamese resistance to alien occupation and rule.
3. The process by which Vietnamese communists under Ho Chi Minh emerged as the leaders of the Vietnamese nationalistic struggle in the 20th century.
4. The reasons for the escalation of U.S. involvement in Vietnam in the decades after World War II.

Examinations and papers aim to develop critical thinking and writing skills. Hence, questions on the examinations will require students to write essays that have a clearly stated thesis and are supported by relevant detail derived from the lectures and the readings. The required paper will be an analytical exercise based on the students’ reading of a selected body of primary sources concerning the nature of combat in the Vietnam War.

Format: The class will meet twice a week. Most of those sessions will be devoted to lectures, but there will occasional discussions and films. Guest speakers will be present at one or two class sessions.

Reading: The following books are required and can be purchased at the U of O Bookstore:
1. Mark Philip Bradley, VIETNAM AT WAR
2. Fred Logevall, EMBERS OF WAR

Course Requirements: There will be a midterm, a final exam, and a paper.

Both exams will be essay tests. The final will not be cumulative; it will deal only with topics covered since the midterm.

The midterm will count for 1/3 of your grade; the final for 1/3; the paper for 1/3. I give make-up exams and grant incompletes only in extraordinary circumstances.

Information about the paper is posted on this Blackboard site, also in “Course Information.” The paper will be due in class on Tuesday, March 4, 2014.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF LECTURES, FILMS, READING ASSIGNMENTS, ETC.

Part I: Vietnam up to 1954

T Jan. 7 Centuries of Struggle (1)
R Jan. 9 Centuries of Struggle (2)
Assignment for the week: Bradley, through end of ch. 1; begin Logevall.
T Jan. 14 French Colonialism
R Jan. 16 Vietnamese Nationalism and Communism (1)
Assignment for the week: Hunt, up to p. 8; continue Logevall.

T Jan. 21 Vietnamese Nationalism and Communism (2)
R Jan. 23 Vietnam and World War II
Assignment for the week: Hunt, pp. 8-16; continue Logevall.

T Jan. 28 First Indochina War
R Jan. 30 Early Phases of U.S. Involvement
Assignment for the week: Hunt, pp. 17-27; Bradley, ch. 2; Logevall, up to end of part 5.

T Feb. 4 Film
R Feb. 6 ***MIDTERM (covering all lectures, discussions, films, and required reading assignments up to this point in the course)
Assignment for the week: No additional reading is required.

Part II: Vietnam, 1954-1975

T Feb. 11 Vietnam, 1954-1960
R Feb. 13 JFK and Vietnam (1)
Assignment for the week: Hunt, ch. 2; Logevall, part 6; Bradley, ch. 3.

T Feb. 18 JFK and Vietnam (2)
R Feb. 20 LBJ and Vietnam (1)
Assignment for the week: Hunt, ch. 3, pp. 85-103, ch. 5; Bradley, ch. 4.

T Feb. 25 LBJ and Vietnam (2)
R Feb. 27 LBJ and Vietnam (3)
Assignment for the week: Work on paper; begin Bao Ninh.

T Mar. 4 Nixon, Disengagement, and Defeat***Also note: papers are due!
R Mar. 6 The Nature of the War (1): Film
Assignment for the week: Bradley, ch. 5 and Coda; Hunt, 103-21; continue Bao Ninh.

T Mar. 11 The Nature of War (2): Personal Experiences
Assignment for the week: Skim Hunt, ch. 7; complete Bao Ninh.

FINAL EXAM: Thurs, Mar. 17, 2014, 13:00. The final covers all lectures, discussions, reading assignments, films, and presentations by guest speakers in Part II of the course.