“The historian must have no country.” — John Quincy Adams, U.S. Representative (MA-Whig), 1831-48

COURSE STRUCTURE
As described in the University Catalog, History 490 is “the capstone course for History majors. It requires students to write frequently in different modes of discourse, concluding with the presentation and delivery of an extensive research paper based on both primary and secondary sources. This is a writing proficiency, WP, course; a grade of C- or better certifies writing proficiency for majors.”

This section of HIST 490 will focus on U.S. involvement in Vietnam. The assigned reading and your research will acquaint you with some of the major issues and developments of the Vietnam War, a conflict that remains a scar on the American psyche.

During the semester’s first five weeks, you will get a crash course on the history of the conflict. You will read George C. Herring’s very fine America’s Longest War for an overview. During the remainder of the semester you will develop and produce a major research paper, 18-25 pages in length.

In a seminar such as History 490, the instructor is a coordinator, not a lecturer. The success of the course largely depends upon the students, who are required to read assignments, write papers, and come to class prepared to share their knowledge and engage in constructive discussion. Perfect attendance is a given. Barring lengthy illness or highly extenuating circumstances, anyone who misses more than one class will automatically receive an F for the course.

REQUIRED BOOKS (All available in campus bookstore.)
George C. Herring, America’s Longest War: The United States and Vietnam, 1950-1975

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE
Week of:
1. Aug. 22  Course Introduction
   Read Practical Tips for Reading Critically Academic Prose and The Verb ‘To Be’ (both on course Website)

2. Aug. 29  Read Herring: Foreword, Preface, Ch. 1-2
   Writing assignment due Monday, Aug. 29: Write a 300-400 word paper (typed, 12 point font, double-spaced, one-inch margins, each page numbered). Begin with an introductory paragraph in which you discuss your knowledge of the Vietnam War. Then, write a one-paragraph summary for the Foreword and Preface, a one-paragraph summary for Chapter 1, and a one-paragraph summary for Chapter 2. In the summary for the Foreword and Preface, simply offer the main ideas presented. In each of summaries for Ch. 1 and Ch. 2, review the author’s argument, and how he presents the material—what are the major topics and issues covered in the chapter? What are strengths and weaknesses and why? Why does Herring title Ch. 1 “A Dead-End Alley” and Ch. 2 “Our Offspring”? Finish the paper with a brief summary paragraph. Write your name at the top of the first page and underneath your name indicate the number of words in your paper.

3. Spt. 5  No class, Labor Day  Read Herring, Ch. 3-4
   Writing assignment due at my office by 5 p.m., Tuesday, Spt. 6. Write a 250-400 word paper (typed, 12 point font, double-spaced, one-inch margins, each page numbered). Begin with a brief paragraph introducing the topics covered in the week’s assigned reading. Then, write a one-paragraph summary for each chapter assigned.
   In each of the chapter summaries, your first sentence should quote the thesis statement for that chapter (if you’re not clear on what a thesis statement is, re-read carefully Practical Tips for Reading Critically Academic Prose). Then, summarize Herring’s argument, and discuss how he presents the material—what are the major topics
and issues covered? What are strengths and weaknesses and why? Is the argument convincing? Why or why not? Why does Herring title Ch. 3 “Limited Partnership” and Ch. 4 “Enough, But Not Too Much”?

Finish the paper with a brief summary paragraph. Write your name at the top of the first page and underneath your name indicate the number of words in your paper.

4. Spt. 12 Read Herring, Ch. 5-6
Writing assignment due in class, Spt. 12, 250-350 words: same format as last week.

5. Spt. 19 Read Herring, Ch. 7-8
Writing assignment due in class, Monday, Spt. 19: same format as past two weeks.

6. Spt. 26 Consultation with instructor re: paper topic (no formal class meeting this week). You need not write anything formal for this consultation. But please come in with some fairly specific ideas about your research topic; that means more than “I guess I’d like to write something about . . .” Be prepared to take notes during our discussion, and plan on it taking about 10 minutes.

7. Oct. 3 Prospectus due at my office (Trinity 207) on Monday, Oct. 3, between 2:00-4:45 (see below for details). No formal class meeting this week.

8. Oct. 10 Outline and Annotated Bibliography due in my office on Monday, Oct. 10, between 2:00-4:45 (see below for details). No formal class meeting this week.

9. Oct. 17 Guided research and writing: instructor available to discuss paper. No formal class meeting this week.

10. Oct. 24 Guided research and writing: instructor available to discuss paper. No formal class meeting this week.

11. Oct. 31 First Draft of paper due (see below for details). Class will meet formally so students can sign up for conference with instructor to discuss first drafts.

12. Nov. 7 Meet with instructor to discuss first drafts. No formal class meeting this week.

13. Nov. 14 Second Draft of paper due (see below for details) on Monday, Nov. 14, between 2:00-4:45.

14. Nov. 28 Class will meet this week. Each student will exchange her/his paper with a Peer Review partner (details will be furnished at appropriate time). We will also begin in-class presentations of Research Papers.

15. Dec. 5 Peer Reviews and in-class presentations of Research Papers.


FINAL GRADE
Your final grade will be tabulated in this manner:
- class participation = 50 points
- papers on assigned readings = 80 points (20 points each)
- 2-page prospectus = 25 points
- draft of outline and annotated bibliography = 25 points
- first draft of paper—all instructions followed = 25 points
- second draft of paper—all instructions followed = 50
- peer review = 20 points
- presentation on research paper = 25 points
- 18-25 page research paper = 200 points

450-500 A (450-459 A-)
400-449 B (440-449 B+  400-410 B-)
350-399 C (390-399 C+  350-360 C-)
300-349 D (340-349 D+)
250-299 F (250-299 F+  250-349 F-)
249-249 F (249-249 F+  249-249 F-)
**SHORT PAPERS ON ASSIGNED READINGS** (papers due in class each week)
During the first five weeks of the semester, each week you will hand in a short paper that will focus on the weekly assigned reading. The papers will sharpen your analytical skills and will allow me to identify any weaknesses in writing mechanics.

The papers will be worth 20 points apiece. A score of 14-15 points will indicate an acceptable performance; a higher grade will reward outstanding analysis and writing mechanics. All scores when handed back are final. A paper with spelling, punctuation, mechanics, and style below college-level standards will be returned to the student with a grade of zero.

All papers must be typed, double-spaced, with one-inch margins, 12 point font, each page numbered. No late papers ("late" is any time I ask you during that day's class to turn in your paper) will be accepted.

**Week 7, Oct. 3  Prospectus on Paper Topic** (worth 25 points)
Write a two-page prospectus (typed, double-spaced, one-inch margins, 12-point font) on the topic you have selected. The prospectus should include:
1) a description of the topic, a paragraph in length;
2) a discussion of the historical significance of the topic, one paragraph in length; address the question: why is this topic important? In other words, so what?
3) a discussion of why you selected the topic, one paragraph in length;
4) a preliminary thesis statement for your paper: if you need a reminder on thesis statements, refer to “Practical Tips for Reading Critically Academic Prose,” posted on the course’s Web Vista site.
5) one paragraph on possible primary and secondary sources for the paper.

This paper is due at my office (Trinity 207) on Monday, Oct. 3, between 2:00-4:45 p.m. (Slide the paper under my office door if I’m not around).

**Week 8, Oct. 10  Draft of Outline and Annotated Bibliography** (worth 25 points)
Each student should write an outline for the entire research paper, at least 2-3 pages in length, and an annotated bibliography, at least a page in length, due by Monday, Oct. 10, between 2:00-4:45 p.m. (Slide the paper under my office door if I’m not around).

The outline should address the paper’s Introduction, Body, and Conclusion. There is no single correct way to format an outline (you will find dozens of variations on the Internet), but whatever way you choose, be consistent throughout. For example, in the middle of the outline do not suddenly introduce Roman numerals to designate major points if you have not used them previously. The more detailed your outline is, the more help I can offer you with respect to the paper’s organization and argument.

Staple the annotated bibliography to the outline. A bibliography is a list of sources (books, journal articles, websites, periodicals, etc.) one is using or has used for researching a topic. Bibliographies are sometimes called “references” or “works cited,” depending on the style or format you are utilizing. An annotation is a summary and/or evaluation. Therefore, an “annotated bibliography” includes a summary and/or evaluation of each of the sources that you have found to date. (You will continue to build your paper’s bibliography as you do more research.)

Your annotations should do the following:
- **Summarize** each source. What are the main arguments in each source? What is the point of this book or article? What topics are covered? If someone asked what this article or book or website is about, what would you say?
- **Assess** the source. After summarizing a source, evaluate it. How is it useful? How does it compare with other sources in your bibliography? Is the information reliable? Is this source biased or objective? What is the goal of the source? For most bibliographical entries, the assessment will necessarily be preliminary at this stage of your research.

**Examples** (drawn from a past section of HIST 490 that focused on the 1970s):

Heylin has interviewed just about everybody who was in any way connected with the birth of punk in New York City in the Seventies. He argues that, for a period in the mid- to late 1970s, seminal punk musicians and bands tried but ultimately
failed to marry rock and art in a commercially viable way. This book is a goldmine of information on the early New York punk scene, rivaled only by Legs McNeil and Gillian McCain’s *Please Kill Me: The Uncensored Oral History of Punk*, and should be extremely helpful for my paper on the early years of punk rock.


Killen mounts a detailed psychoanalysis of 1973 as a window into the entire decade of the Seventies. He has a chapter, “Personality Crisis,” on the dark side of the 1970s, which will be useful for my paper on cults.


Carroll offers the first scholarly historical look at the Seventies. He is especially strong on popular culture and literature, and should be a good source for my paper on best-selling books of the decade.

For bibliographical formatting, see Rampolla, *A Pocket Guide to Writing History*, Sections 7b and 7c, plus p. 132. As you build your bibliography, I urge you to read carefully “Evaluating History Resources Found on the Internet” (on the course website).

**Week 11, Oct. 31 First Draft due** (worth 25 points)
Not counting endnotes and bibliography, your first draft should run at least ten pages.

**Week 13, Nov. 14 Second Draft due** (worth 50 points)
The second draft should be a complete draft with endnotes and bibliography (not annotated).

**RESEARCH PAPER REQUIREMENTS (Final draft due last day of semester, Friday, Dec. 16)**
I will have more to say about the precise requirements for your final research paper. But this will cover the main points.

**Before you begin writing your paper, read carefully the Writing Guide that I’ve placed on the course Web Vista site.**

Your paper should run no less than 18 pages and no more than 25 pages, including endnotes and bibliography (not annotated). Your grade on the paper will be reduced by one-third grade level for each page less or more than this specified length. The paper should be double-spaced, with one inch margins and 12 point font. Each page should be numbered. Do not write your name anywhere in the interior of the paper.

Use endnotes, not footnotes. The format for endnotes is exactly the same as footnotes, except that endnotes appear following the body of the paper (before the bibliography) rather than at the bottom of text pages. For endnote formatting, see Rampolla, *A Pocket Guide to Writing History*, Sections 7b and 7c, plus p. 131.

The bibliography should come after the endnotes. Although you will turn in an annotated bibliography earlier in the semester, the final paper’s bibliography should not be annotated. For bibliographical formatting, see Rampolla, *A Pocket Guide to Writing History*, Sections 7b and 7c, plus p. 132.

**Your paper should draw on no less than ten sources, of which at least four should be primary sources. You may use material found on the Internet, subject to two conditions:**

1. an important primary source that can be accessed only online. Material found on the Internet, even historical documents, is of widely varying quality and credibility. Generally, primary sources made available by a reputable institution such as the National Archives or a state historical society should be legitimate sources. A website thrown together by an amateur history buff or a high school student (sad to say, sometimes even a high school teacher) should be avoided. Read carefully *Evaluating History Resources Found on the Internet*, which I have placed on the course Website. If in doubt about a particular website, consult with me.

2. material found online that has been published previously as hard copy. For example, if by using a database from the library you can access an article that was originally published in an academic historical journal, then I will accept that. For this kind of source, you should offer, in your endnotes and in the final bibliography, both the online and publication citations.
While you may consult Wikipedia and online encyclopedias for factual information, they may not count as one of your ten sources.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES — Department of History</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Student’s work demonstrates critical use and proper citation of both primary and secondary sources.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Student’s work employs the formal styles of writing, argumentation, and presentation that historians use.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Student’s work demonstrates a basic mastery of research techniques that historians use.</td>
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<td>4. Oral presentations are clear and comprehensive.</td>
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<td>5. Student’s work reflects an understanding of historiographic traditions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Student’s work reflects an understanding of the intellectual, political, economic, social, and cultural history of the United States, Europe, Classical Civilization, the Near East, or one “Non-Western” area.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Student’s work reflects an understanding the roles of race, class, gender, or ethnicity in history.</td>
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“Be very careful because it is very difficult to be a historian.” — José Enrique de la Pena, 19th century Mexican army officer and diarist