

Vietnam Study Abroad – Summer 2020

ENGL 392. Travel and Culture (Credits 3) This course is designed to allow students from all disciplines to travel in the United States and abroad to study language, literature and writing. Topics and destinations vary, determined by the special interests and needs of students and the expertise of faculty. May involve additional fees. Course may be repeated once for credit. (*CNU Undergraduate Catalog*) Pre-Req: ENGL 123 Pre or Co-Req ENGL 223

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The history of Vietnam and the United States are inextricably linked. While we most often think of this interaction as a period of political and social turmoil in the US, the countries have a longer, wider, and deeper relationship. This section of ENGL 392 will examine the historical and continuing relationship of these cultures through reading, writing, and visiting the three historical capitals of Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City, Hue, and Hanoi. Students will better understand the historical interactions of these two countries and cultures and will, through writing and travel, explore the ways we have impacted each other. The travel portion of this course will run from June 9th through June 24nd of 2020 (subject to change). Additional meetings with students will be held from January through May of 2020 for travel and course preparation.

Instructors:

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Required texts

- *The Things They Carried*, Tim O'Brien
- *The Novel Without a Name*, Duong Thu Huong
- *Chi Pheo*, Nam Cao
- *When the Light is Out*, Ngu Tat Tu
- *Ticket to Childhood: A Novel*, Nguyen Nhat Anh
- *A Good Scent from a Strange Mountain*, Robert Olen Butler
- "Letter From The Editors," *Off Assignment.com*
- "Thirteen Tips for the Accidental Ambassador," *EthicalTraveler.com*

Course Objectives or Outcomes:

- Produce varied types of writing that encourage thinking about the topic and that may build into or prepare students for extended research and writing assignments.
- Critically engage a variety of texts, learning to discern main points from secondary data, in order to create an original thesis that is supported by outside evidence.
- Produce personal creative writing as guided by assignments
- Effectively integrate outside sources into their own prose, while managing their tone and maintaining their own voice. Skills of effective paraphrasing, avoiding plagiarism, and properly documenting sources are integral here.
- Produce staged drafts shaped by peer feedback, as well as by the student's own evolving understanding of the topic and the professors' responses to the work.

Grading

Grades will be calculated according to the scale below.

• Reading Discussion Board posts	20%
• Cultural Response Essay	15%
• Travel Essay	15%
• Ethnographic Essay	15%
• Historical Comparison Essay	15%
• Travel journal	20%

This syllabus is subject to change, in which case, you will be notified of any changes by email and/or in class.

Course Policies

Attendance: Students will be required to attend all classes and scheduled group events. Consideration will be made for unexpected illness.

Grading Scale: (A numerical grade will be included with the letter grade on assignments.)

A 95-100	C 74-76
A- 90-94	C- 70-73
B+ 87-89	D+ 67-69
B 84-86	D 64-66
B- 80-83	D- 60-63
C+ 77-79	F 0-59

CNU Honor Code: “On my honor, I will maintain the highest possible standards of honesty, integrity and personal responsibility. That means I will not lie, cheat, or steal and as a member of this academic community, I am committed to creating an environment of respect and mutual trust.”

Disabilities:

In order for a student to receive an accommodation for a disability, that disability must be on record in the Dean of Students' Office, 3rd Floor, David Student Union (DSU). If you believe that you have a disability, please contact Dr. Kevin Hughes, Dean of Students (594-7160) to discuss your needs. Dean Hughes will provide you with the necessary documentation to give to your professors. Students with documented disabilities are required to notify the instructor no later than the first day on which they require an accommodation (the first day of class is recommended) in private, if accommodation is needed. The instructor will provide students with disabilities with all reasonable accommodations, but students are not exempted from fulfilling the normal requirements of the course. Work completed before the student notifies the instructor

of his/her disability may be counted toward the final grade at the sole discretion of the instructor.

COURSE SCHEDULE

January – May: Monthly pre-departure meetings

June 2020:

Tues 6/9 Depart Newport News. - Airport arrival time TBD.

Wed 6/10 Late arrival in Ho Chi Minh City; group will check into hotel and retire

Thur 6/11 Ho Chi Minh City: Group orientation Breakfast
City tour of markets and streets, visit some historical sites including French Post Office, former CIA building, Roman Catholic Cathedral

Fri 6/12 Tour Reunification Palace and War Remnants Museum; group lunch; post tour discussion

Sat 6/13 Tour Mekong Delta and Cu Chi Tunnels; post-tour discussion

Sun 6/14 Optional culture classes; group dinner; downtown river walk

Mon 6/15 Travel to Hue: City orientation tour; group dinner; night market walk

Tues 6/16 Tour Imperial Palace & Royal Tombs; group lunch; post tour discussion and writing

Wed 6/17 DMZ all day tour; post class discussion and writing

Thur 6/18 Morning visit to Japanese Bridge OR An Dinh Palace; evening train to Hanoi

Fri 6/19 Arrive in Hanoi by train: Tour of old city and Hoan Kiem Lake; evening culture show

Sat 6/20 Citadel, Hoa Lo Prison

Sun 6/21 Tour Temple of Literature, Ethnography Museum and Water Puppets Show

Mon 6/22 Halong Bay Tour

Tues 6/23 Free day; group dinner at Chim Sao

Wed 6/24 Depart Hanoi

Assignment Descriptions for the ENGL 392 required writing:

Travel Essay

In line with our discussions about observation, audience expectation, narrative style, and clarity of thought, this assignment requires you to write a travel essay of 1,000-2,000 words that presents a singular destination in Vietnam. This destination can be a city, a neighborhood, or a tourist attraction that would be of special interest to an American audience. The essay should offer practical information as well as insight into the requirements and rewards of the visit. In addition, the essay should contextualize the destination in its historical and cultural significance from both an American and Vietnamese perspective.

The Travel Essay will be evaluated according to the following:

1. A clear, original take on the subject matter.
2. A clear understanding and engagement with the audience, in this case an American traveler.
3. A writing style that incorporates observation and attention to detail.
4. An approach that incorporates historical, cultural, and contemporary realities.
5. Standards of presentations and style consistent with the essay type.
6. Meeting stated requirements.

Cultural Response Essay

This assignment requires you to write a response essay of 1,000-2,000 words that engages with a cultural difference after you encounter such difference in your travels. The essay should engage with and incorporate the concepts of the outsider, the ethical traveler, and the guest observer that we have discussed and encountered in our assigned readings. While the essay should primarily draw from personal observation and experience, it should also engage the subject in the context of Vietnamese-American history and relationships, which can be drawn from your readings or some research.

The Cultural Response Essay will be evaluated according to the following:

1. A clear, original take on the subject matter.
2. A clear understanding and engagement with the cultural phenomena or subject.
3. A writing style that incorporates observation, personal reflection, and contextualization of the subject matter.
4. An approach that uses contemporary approaches to cross-cultural engagement and difference.
5. Standards of presentations and style consistent with the essay type.
6. Meeting stated requirements

Ethnographic Essay

Based on your observations and travels in Hue, along with your first-hand observations and discussions with local residents, you will write an ethnographic essay of 1,000-2,000 words that presents your observations and insights to an American audience. The essay should draw from the literary texts that we have read for class and put them into conversation with your first-person observations and discussions.

The Ethnographic Essay will be evaluated according to the following:

1. A thematic point that is illustrated through personal and literary examples.
2. A clear understanding and engagement with the audience, in this case an American at home.
3. A writing style that incorporates appropriate interview and literary journalism techniques.
4. An approach that incorporates the literary sources and puts them in comparison with the current social situation.
5. Standards of presentations and style consistent with the essay type.
6. Meeting stated requirements.

Historical Comparison Essay

This Historical Comparison Essay of 1,000-2,000 words will be a response text that compares the current social, political and cultural conditions you find while travelling to the literary worlds created in our readings. The essay should focus specifically on the contrasting worlds of Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, both between the two cities and between the cities as they exist now and how they are presented in literary texts. The essay should also present some comparison of the American perspective to the Vietnamese perspective both current and past.

The Historical Comparison Essay will be evaluated according to the following:

1. A clear understanding of the historical and contemporary situations in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City.
2. A comparison of the attitudes of Americans and Vietnamese about the two cities in their literary presentations.
3. A writing style that ask questions about the motives behind presentations and draws conclusions about these motivations.
4. An approach that shows historical, cultural, and contemporary understanding.
5. Standards of presentations and style consistent with the essay type.
6. Meeting stated requirements.

Travel Journal

The travel journal will serve you while traveling to record your observations, conduct research, write out drafts, save ideas, and experiment with approaches to subject matter. During the trip, we will have several days of guided journal work to help you record your ideas while they are fresh as well as practice a variety of observational techniques. We also encourage you to write in the journal both every morning and evening, even if just for a few minutes, to record your ideas, but also to write down ideas, scenes, and interactions as they occur so that you can draw on them

later. We will supply a small portable journal that you can carry with you as we travel. There is no strict requirement for number of pages, but you will be expected to have a minimum of at least 17 entries over the course of the trip, including one pre-departure and one post-departure entry.

The Travel Journal will be evaluated based on completion of at least 17 thorough entries as per instructions as well as verbal instructions on site.

Reading Discussion Board Posts

Posts will demonstrate an active participation in discussion directly related to reading assigned pages of the required texts. They will reflect careful critical thinking based on not only the texts but experiential observances of daily occurrences.

Posts will be evaluated on completion of each assigned entry, including interaction with other writers' posts.