RARITAN VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
REVISED COURSE OUTLINE

History and Literature of the Vietnam War—ENGL 259

I. Basic Course Information:

A. Course Number and Title: ENGL—259 History and Literature of the Vietnam War
B. Date of Revision: April 2005
C. Sponsoring Department: English
D. Semester Credit Hours: 3
E. Weekly Contact Hours: 3
F. Prerequisites: English I
G. Laboratory Fees: 0

II. Catalogue Description:

Prerequisite: English I. This interdisciplinary course will examine both the history and the literature of the Vietnam War. It explores both the antecedents of the war, in terms of European colonialism, Vietnamese nationalism, and American foreign policy, as well as pivotal moments such as the gulf of Tonkin Resolution of 1964 and the Tet Offensive of 1968. It will study the history of the war, the literature born out of this war and the relationships between this literature and this conflict. Finally, it will consider the war's legacy: its consequences and lessons, and the relevance of this legacy today.

III. Statement of Course Need:

The Vietnam War has left an indelible mark on American consciousness, because it is the only war this country has ever lost. Therefore, the reasons for our entry into the war, our conduct during it, and the lessons to be learned from our experiences in it remain topics of emotional debate today. The preoccupation with this war surfaces repeatedly during recent American conflicts overseas. It becomes a reference point on the debate about the morality and appropriateness of the war. The interest of the present generation of college students is amply demonstrated by the more than 400 courses on the Vietnam War which are presently offered at American colleges and universities.

IV. Place of Course in College Curriculum:

Free Elective
The course meets a requirement in the following program: English.

Course Transferability: The History and Literature of the Vietnam War transfers to four-year institutions.
V. Outline of Course Content

A. Introduction to course
B. Antecedents of American Involvement
C. Build up during Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Johnson years
D. Literature by and about Veterans of the War
E. Post-TET Denouement
F. Literature of the Post-Vietnam Period
G. Conclusion of Course

VI. Educational Goals and Learning Outcomes

A. General Education Goals
   Students will
   1. employ correct literary terminology in discussions and in written work (G.E. 1, G.E. 2, G.E. 4);
   2. interpret texts for discussion and written work (G.E. 1, G.E. 2);
   3. defend interpretations of texts using appropriate rhetorical approaches (G.E. 1, G.E. 2);
   4. use textual evidence to support claims (G.E. 1, G.E. 2, G.E. 3);
   5. distinguish among and between the ideas of diverse writers (G.E. 1, G.E. 2, G.E. 4, G.E. 6);
   6. explain individual interpretations of literary texts in discussion and writing (G.E. 2, G.E. 2);
   7. examine intricate components of literature for essay writing (G.E. 1, G.E. 2);
   8. analyze connections between history and literature (G.E. 1, G.E. 2);
   9. report on their analyses of literature in discussion and in written work (G.E. 1, G.E. 2);

B. LEARNING OUTCOMES
   Students will be able to
   1. synthesize primary and secondary texts in discussion and written work;
   2. apply rhetorical and theoretical strategies to written work;
   3. challenge traditional world views by applying diverse theoretical paradigms;
   4. appraise cultural values through an examination of history and literature;
   5. locate critical texts through responsible research and retrieval of information;
   6. analyze texts as a basis for original thinking and writing.

VII. Modes of Teaching and Learning

Formats, modes, and methods for teaching and learning may be:
   • lecture/discussion
   • small-group work, depending on instructor
   • guest speakers, depending on instructor
• student oral presentations, depending on instructor
• student collaboration
• independent study

VIII. Papers, Examinations, and other Assessment Instruments

Assessment methods may be:
• formal writing
• research paper
• class discussions
• in-class formal and informal writing
• discussion questions
• collaborative projects

IX. Grade Determinants

In order to evaluate achievement of the goals and outcomes listed above, possible grade determinants may be:
• research paper
• formal analytical essays
• in-class essays during midterm and final examinations
• depending on instructor, may include a journal or oral report
• class participation, which may include group work

X. Texts and Materials

Suggested textbooks:


-films and videos, when appropriate, to enhance study of given work
-secondary readings are also used to supplement study of the period
XI. Resources

The library has the resources necessary for the students to study and research the authors and works covered in this course.