

Study Abroad: Vietnam.

By Gerald Waite and Kenneth Hall, Ball State University

This Immersive learning field experience follows five former student research trips and student/veteran trips to Vietnam. It also builds on a former immersive learning class in which Ball State undergraduate students wrote a published text that was distributed to seventh grade social studies teachers in the State of Indiana and republished in Vietnamese. The class requires an expertise in both Vietnamese culture and the history of the American conflict in that country. The students for this class have been enrolled in Honors 189/Vietnam, and Dr. Tony Edmonds History of the Vietnam War Class, Hist 301. In addition they will pursue an intensive PRE-TRIP course of study for the field school that will assure their expertise and writing skill. Students will use “I-Book” and “Pages” to collaboratively write a digital text tentatively titled “When I saw the Elephant: Vietnam Vets Remember” (a working title, may change with thematic alterations). In addition, students in this field class must write a paper to present at a professional academic conference in the 2013-1014 school year. Former students have done community presentations but this requirement ups the bar.

This field study is an intense experiential process. It meets all the criteria of Ball State’s “Immersive Learning” template. Students have been carefully screened for work ethic and writing ability. The requirements have been fully explained to them and they have agreed to participate fully in the research.

Dr. James Hendricks (Criminal Justice and a Vietnam War veteran) was originally designated in the syllabus as an instructor but cannot be paid so he is accompanying the tour as an unpaid consultant. Subsequently Dr. Ken Hall (History, a Vietnam history scholar) has been added as the trip co-leader and course instructor.

The 20 days of the field trip are packed with a wide variety of immersive learning and experiential encounters, all of which must be thoroughly detailed by students in their field notes and subsequent (later) formal writing. Building on an existing knowledge base from Honors 189 and History 301, these students will research Vietnam through:

- Open ended interviews with the five veteran consultants accompanying the trip.
- Visits to former firebases, battle sites and villages. (See itinerary) Visits to regional archaeological and historical sites and especially those associated with early Cham civilization in central and southern Vietnam, with introductory and follow-up discussions of these sites significance with Dr. Hall.
- Interviews and classes with guide and local consultant Mr. Nguyen Luc
- Interviews with local business people and residents.
- Family visits. (4 are arranged thus far)

- Family ceremonies. (students will be guests at an ancestral death anniversary and the mid-year lunar festival)

Course experiences in Vietnam regularly include introductions, presentations, and discussions. All buses and boats are equipped with an excellent PA and the instructors and Mr Luc are experienced in providing on-going travel presentations. A typical travel day might include three hours of bus or boat time during which Mr. Waite, Dr. Hall, Mr. Luc, or other arranged instructors, such as teacher Nguyen Hong Tan from Hoi An, will explain the ethnological and historical importance of the specific areas visited. Students will also have time to interview consultants and this process will be closely monitored/mentored by Mr. Waite and Dr. Hall.

Honors 390

Readings

- Lawrence, Mark Atwood. (2008) *The Vietnam War: A concise international History*. Oxford University Press. Oxford and New York.
- Dragicevich, Peter, Nick Ray, Brett Atkinson. (2012) *Vietnam: Country Travel Guide*. Lonely Planet Publishers.
- O'Brien, Tim. (1998) *The Things They Carried* Houghton Mifflin. Boston, MA

Course packet at Hyatt Printing including:
Hall, Kenneth R (2011)

- "Competition on the east coast of the Mainland: Early Champa and Vietnam political economies"
- "The Evolution of the Vietnamese Monarchy in the Central and souther regions, C, 1500-1700".
- Instructional handouts: readings in ethnographic interviewing.

Learning Objectives

The overall goal of this course is to create a deeper understanding of a combat veterans' reflections on a cultural landscape and a war, and to gain personal experience with the regions of Vietnam where American soldiers were engaged. As honors students and citizens, political participants, and parents of a new generation, the serious student/scholar of today will shape the destiny of our nation and world in future international arenas. This process can be developed and improved through their in-depth understanding of the historic and cultural landscape of past wars. Historians may tell the larger story of a war but, the people who fought in it can give an expanded sense of humanity and cultural insights only available from their specific vantage point. Through ethnographic interviews, field studies, participant observation, and collaboratively written narrative, students in this class will create understandings of historical culture unique to the world of a combat veteran.

Specific Objectives

Students will critically analyze challenges and issues related to topics of American History, i.e. The American War in Việt Nam, and also non-Western studies, as the course will provide students with the essentials of Vietnam history and opportunities for immersive experiences through first person contact with Vietnamese in their native country.

Students will develop knowledge of challenges in ways that create complex understandings of cultural diversity in a globalizing world.

Students will learn and demonstrate ethnographic and interviewing skills that contribute to a collaborative scholarly project. They will also gain an understanding of Vietnamese society via visits to significant Viet historical sites and social immersion.

These objectives will be demonstrated through the creation of a digital book entitled: *When I saw the Elephant: Việt Nam, Now and Then.* (working title)

Methods of Instruction

1. Lecture
2. Field based learning
3. Seminar

Course Outline

Students will commence class meetings the week of April 7, 2013. On campus classes will meet one night a week for four weeks prior to departure to Việt Nam.

The class will fly to Ho Chi Minh City, Việt Nam May 6, 2013, arriving May 7, and will meet with a veterans' tour group (trip) of 6 people. The field trip is designed to acquaint the participants with the major geographic regions of the country such as the Mekong Delta, The coastal Plain, the Central highlands, The Red River Delta, and Halong Bay. In addition, tours will include urban areas and rural areas observing subsistence patterns in those areas and meeting people from all walks of life. The class and expanded group (veterans) will meet and visit the homes of traditional farmers, urban business people, local educators, and everyday Vietnamese immersed in the routine of daily life.

In addition, this trip will visit former combat areas from the American and French war eras in the country. These trips include, but are not limited to, Cu Chi Combat Base and tunnel complex; An Hoa Combat Base, 7th and 5th Marines; The Arizona Territory and Dodge City, Quang Nam Province; Freedom Hill at/near Danang; Ba Na, French hill station; Phu Bai Airbase; Hue City and the Citadel; Quang Tri Province, including Quang Tri Citadel, The Rockpile, and Khe Sanh Combat Base. The class will interview veterans from all these areas about their perceptions then and now, and will have access to veteran interviews from the opposing side. These regional visits will include stops at major historical sites, notably early Cham and Vietnamese temples, royal complexes and tombs.

The interviews with these consultants and the potential Vietnamese participants will inform each student's writings and interpretations of time-related perceptions going back 40+ years. In addition, the veterans will be available to work collaboratively with the students to assist in the development of and writing, photography, and analysis of their experiences. Each participant will have the opportunity to collaborate in the development of text and images for purposes of inclusion in the final document, a digital book.

Seminars are scheduled almost daily throughout the trip and student work/writing sessions are scheduled at appropriate times. Facilities are available in all locations to set up comfortable classroom areas in the hotels and at Than Chau Trinh University in Hoi An, whose Director of International Exchange, Nguyen Hong Tan, is a class consultant. Students will be required to transcribe interviews at these locations, collaborate with interviewees for accuracy, and initiate the writing of A text for final submission. Class meetings will continue once the class has returned Stateside either in person at Ball State, or alternatively on-line. A completed paper submission is expected not later than the end of first summer session for inclusion in the final COURSE document.

The student submissions for this project will include narrative relevant to the veterans' war experience, their perceptions of the current country, and students' observations and research through immersion in the cultural milieu.

Assessment

Course grades will be determined through both summative and normative assessment, evaluated through Participatory 20% and academic efforts, 80%.

Participation and attendance:

20%

Attendance and 100% participation is mandatory. Students must complete the trip pre-training, the trip, and post trip assignments in order to receive a grade. In addition, students must give reasonable evidence through their participation that they have read and understood all the class materials including associated risk management handouts. Instructors will make subjective evaluations of professional behavior, provide appropriate feedback, and monitor students' behaviors at all times throughout the trip. Students are required to maintain a travel journal of their experiences which is not graded but they must be able to demonstrate they are maintaining it.

A completed publishable manuscript submission of approximately 500 words or 20 pages:
Format TBA:

50%

Assigned submissions must be handed in NLT end of first Summer Session 2013. Participants will make all on-going work available for editing throughout the class and until submitted and accepted.

Peer evaluations:

10%

Student participants will collaboratively write a set of standards and grading rubric for the trip and class prior to beginning fieldwork and submit a peer evaluation at the end of each week beginning May 10th .

Interview transcripts.

20%

Students must maintain a complete set of interview transcripts. This requires that they initiate transcripts at the beginning of the trip and edit them daily. Instructor(s) will check these daily for completion and accuracy. The transcripts are to be turned in with the final submission.

Honors 310

Readings

- Avieli, Nir (2012) *Rice Talks: Food and Community in a Vietnamese Village*. IU Press. Bloomington, IN.
- Hayton, Bill (2010) *Vietnam: Rising Dragon* Yale University Press. New Haven and London.

Learning Objectives

The overall goal of this course is a deeper understanding of Southeast Asia's "emerging tiger economy". Through immersive travel and people to people acquaintances, Ball state Students can acquire a first person perspective of a developing global nation.

Specific Objectives

Students will learn ethnographic methods and demonstrate proficiency through interviews and analysis in a culture other than their own.

Class participants will gather data from multiple sources, including, texts and interviews, and synthesize data in written form.

Students will work collaboratively with consultants to produce narrative for inclusion in a digital book.

Students will present their findings individually or collectively (a panel) at an academic conference during the 2013-2014 school year. A poster presentation is also permitted with prior permission from the instructor.

These objectives will be demonstrated through:

1. The completion of a presentation length paper.
2. The presentation of that paper or poster in an academic conference (undergrad or professional) during the 2013-2014 school year.

Methods of Instruction

1. Lecture
2. Field based learning
3. Seminar

Course Outline

Books list and syllabi will be made available March 12, 2013. Students will commence class meetings the week of April 7, 2013. On campus classes will meet one night a week for four weeks prior to departure to Việt Nam. See itinerary for class topics.

The class will fly to Ho Chi Minh City, Việt Nam May 6, 2013, arriving May 7, and will meet with a veterans trip of 6 people. The field trip is designed to acquaint the participants with the major geographic regions of the country such as the Mekong Delta, The coastal Plain, the Central highlands, The Red River Delta, and Halong Bay. In addition, tours will include urban areas and rural areas observing subsistence patterns in those areas and meeting people from all walks of life. The class and expanded group (veterans) will meet and visit the homes of traditional farmers, urban business people, local educators, and everyday Vietnamese immersed in the routine of daily life.

The interviews with these consultants and the potential Vietnamese participants will inform each student's writings and interpretations of culturally related perceptions. In addition, the consultants will be available to work collaboratively with the students to assist in the development of and writing, photography, and analysis of their experiences. Each participant will have the opportunity to collaborate in the development of text and images for purposes of inclusion in the joint class final document, a digital book. The writing of this document will also inform the student's additional paper requirement for Honors 310.

Seminars are scheduled almost daily throughout the trip and student work/writing sessions are scheduled at appropriate times. Facilities are available in all locations to set up comfortable classroom areas in the hotels and at Than Chau Trinh University in Hoi An, whose Director of International Exchange, Nguyen Hong Tan, is a class consultant. Students will be required to transcribe interviews at these locations, collaborate with interviewees for accuracy, and initiate the writing of text for final submission. Class meetings will continue once the class has returned Stateside either in person at Ball State, or alternatively on-line. A completed paper submission is expected no later than the end of first summer session for inclusion in the final document.

Assessment

Course grades will be determined through both summative and normative assessment.

Participation and attendance:

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Attendance and 100% participation is mandatory. Students must complete the trip pre-training, the trip, and post trip assignments in order to receive a grade. In addition, students must give reasonable evidence through their participation that they have read and

Field Trip	42 hours teaching/seminar 100 hours participant observation 30 hours preparation/transcribing and writing, compiling, organizing and detailing ethnographic notes. <u>172 Hours</u> (see itinerary)
Post Field Trip	12 hours supervised class time May 31 1-4 PM Honors House; First post-class meeting, correlating and completing field notes. June 5, 1-4 PM Honors House. Evaluating field notes, creating a collaborative written text for editing. June 7, 1-4 PM Honors House. Supervised writing and editing. Creating themes for professional presentations June 14 1-4 PM honors House: Presentation writing and practice presentation. Submission of final documents 42 hours outside writing time <u>54 hours</u>
Total time investment:	274 Hours

Field Trip

These 20 days are packed with a wide variety of immersive learning and experiential encounters, all of which must be thoroughly detailed in field note form and later formal writing. Building on an existing knowledge base from honors 189 and History 301, these students will research Vietnam through:

- Open-ended interviews with the five veteran consultants accompanying the trip.
- Visits to former firebases, battle sites and villages. (See itinerary)
- Interviews and classes with guide and local consultant Mr. Nguyen Luc
- Interviews with local business people.
- Family visits. (4 are arranged thus far)
- Family ceremonies. (students will be guests at an ancestral death anniversary and the mid-year lunar festival)

Course experiences also include lecture, presentations, and discussions while en-route. All buses and boats are equipped with an excellent PA and the instructors and Mr Luc are experienced at on-going travel presentations. A typical travel day might include three hours of bus or boat time during which Mr. Waite, Dr. Hall, Mr. Luc, or other arranged instructors, such as teacher Nguyen Hong Tan from Hoi An, will explain the ethnological importance of the specific area visited. Students will also have time to interview consultants, and the process will be closely monitored/mentored.

Travel Itinerary

May 6, 2013. Depart Indianapolis fly to Ho Chi Minh City, Việt Nam arriving May 7th.

*9 hrs May 8, 7 AM Class in Dai Nam Hotel dining room. Walking tour of City. War museum, Reunification Palace, Post Office, Ben Than Market, District One.

*10 hrs May 9, Cu Chi Tunnel complex and Combat Base. Cao Dai Temple at Tay Ninh. Noon class meeting with Ms. Ngoc Thuyet former Viet Cong Combatant. Lunch in Tay Ninh City, then home visit with Kim Phuc family (“girl in the picture”) + 1 hrs individual work.

*10 hrs May 10, Early hotel departure. Class time on buses and boats to Mekong Delta. Ethnological study of peasant subsistence farming operations, local manufacturing, and first interviews with consultants. + 1 hrs individual work.

*6hrs May 11 Mekong Delta wake up. Breakfast class with Nguyen Luc, cultural consultant. Aquaculture tours, floating market tour, church and pagoda visits. Potential site visit to OC EO archaeological site on either day.

Bus to HCMC and flight to Danang. + 2 hrs individual work, organizing transcript notes to this point

*8 hrs May 12 Early breakfast and class in hotel. Bus to My Son, Cham ruins. Find An Hoa firebase. Interviews and field class w/ J. Hendricks. Return to Hoi An through the “Arizona Territory.” + 1 hrs individual work.

*1 hrs May 13 Early class at hotel then free day for all for beach, shopping etc. Optional trip to My Lai massacre site. Interviews optional. + 2 hrs individual work.

*10 hrs May 14 Boat trip to Go Noi Island aka “Dodge City” Home visit with Le Hung. Village Temple visit to Phu Phong Dinh. Family Temple visits. Possible visit with Nguyen Hoang, party chairman and village chief Phu Phong Village. + 1 hrs individual work

*8 hrs May 15 Bus from Hoi An to BA Na, a French hill fort west of Danang. Short lecture by Arnie Erikson, USMC possible stop near Freedom Hill, First Marine Division Headquarters during the war era. Churches in Hoa Vang and Dai Loc Districts on return. + 2 hrs individual work.

*8hrs May 16 Work session in hotel for students transcribing and writing. + 1 hrs individual work
A walking study tour of Hoi An with Dr. Hall.

*10 hrs May 17 Collaborative work session with consultants- write-edit-write. + 1 hrs individual work

*10 hrs May 18 Bus to Danang and Hue City. Stops at Cham Museum in Danang, top of Hai Vang Pass, and City of the Dead. Short class at Binh Minh Hotel in Hue and evening free. + 1 hrs individual work

*12 hrs May 19 Bus to Quang Tri and DMZ area. Khe Sanh battle site and museum, The Rockpile, Quang Tri City Citadel, and Mine Action Center. Interviews with Nguyen Phu, director.

*10 hrs May 20 Early breakfast and very short breakfast class. Perfume River Tour. Thien Mu Pagoda, Tombs of Ming Mang, Tu Duc, and Khai Dinh (Emperors tombs). + 1 hrs individual work

*8 hrs May 21 Cyclo Tour of Hue City, the Citadel and Forbidden City, the War Museum, the Central Market. Home visits with Nguyen Van Lam and family (cultural consultant). Visits to Cham sites and early graveyard complex. + 2 hrs individual

*2 hrs May22 Second photo-op at City of the dead, Phu Bai airport and plane to Hanoi Noi Ba Airport. + 4 hrs individual work.

*8 hrs May 23 Hanoi City tour. Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum, Temple of Literature, and Museum of Ethnology. Evening Water Puppet show. + 2 hrs individual work.

*8 hrs Bat Trang Pottery Village and local farm observations along the Red River. Afternoon, transcribing and writing seminar in hotel. + 2 hrs individual work

*4 hrs May 25 Transport to Halong Bay, overnight cruise-class on ship.

==== May 26 Travel to the U.S. + 6 hrs individual work while enroute, all transcripts must be checked and completed, last possibility for in-person corrections with consultants. .

30 Hours individual work, compiling/editing ethnographic notes.

142 hours class and consultation/field-work during trip, including 18 hours+ of organized writing time.

172 Hours total during trip

Grading Rubric

Dates, locations, and content	Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Below Expectations
April 7 to May 3 Muncie, Introduction to Việt Nam, history, economy, globalization, and a methodology for ethnography. 12 contact hours 36 homework hours	Student's notes and writings indicate a thorough understanding of the required readings. Observed practice ethnography produces a well-written narrative.	Student is available for class and has completed the required readings. Observed practice ethnography produces transcript text but little narrative.	Student has not completed preparatory readings as evidenced through writing and discussion. Observed practice ethnography produces little or no text.

<p>Week 1 May 6- 11 in Việt Nam Students follow instructions traveling, are accountable at all times, have the required baggage contents, collaborate to create a class peer rubric, and attend all meetings with required writing equipment. Begin journaling and taking field notes. 35 observation and class hours</p>	<p>Student is present and helps others. Understands the travel rules created collaboratively before departure. Takes notes and begins a transcript of observations and field notes. Instrumental in the creation of a functional peer evaluation rubric. leads by example. Can justify peer evaluation results.</p>	<p>Shows up and is prepared to travel with notebook and other requirements met. Engages in some questioning and starts a travel journal. Has some entries in a transcription journal. Finishes peer evaluation.</p>	<p>Not where he/she is supposed to be. Doesn't follow travel instructions. No notebook or interviews started. No plan for interviews no transcription journal started. Unthought out peer evaluation or none at all.</p>
<p>Week 2 On the road in Việt Nam May 12-18 Students are spending time interviewing consultants. Journaling. Transcribing interview notes. Shows evidence of local knowledge from previous reading of background texts. 39 hours of observation and contact 16 hours of transcribing and writing</p>	<p>Student can produce a narrative text from interviews and road experience and plans ahead on their own. Is able to help others filter their interview experience. Has produced documentation of interviews with local consultants as well as veteran consultants. Has spent some quality time with local consultants. Works well without supervision. Peer eval-again</p>	<p>Shows up and eats the food. Can conduct interviews with minimal supervision. Keeps adequate notes and can transcribe interviews with some help. Has an interview plan and outline prepared for the next day. Peer eval again.</p>	<p>Late for the bus, hard to get up and get going. Keeps other people waiting. No planned work. Chicken scratches for notes that can't be read. No developed relationship with consultants. Have to go find them every time you turn your back in the writing sessions. Peer eval, maybe.</p>

<p>Week 3 Hue City and Hanoi Students should have developed narrative themes, that are reflective of their interviews and collaboration with consultants. Will have developed good relationships with consultants and will use this time to analyze and incorporate collaboration comments in text. 47 hours observation-interviews-seminars</p>	<p>Has a well developed narrative ready for edit. Has collaborated with veteran consultants and Viet consultants and included their comments in interview transcription. Has a complete day by day journal. Can help others and recommend strategies for narrative development. Good peer review write ups.</p>	<p>Knows where we are on the map and is still taking notes. Transcriptions are caught up and is collaborating with consultants and peers. Is at least talking about narrative thematic development and possibly starting to write a little. A fair peer evaluation.</p>	<p>Doesn't know what day this is or where we are. Signs of culture shock. Ill behaviors can affect the whole group. Transcripts are not caught up and peer evaluations have more to do with personal bias than performance.</p>
<p>Post travel meetings at Honors College BSU, alternatively on-line May 31 8 to 12 June 7 8-12 June 10 8-12 last edit June 14 12-2 Turn in 14 Hours class time 40 hours prep & writing</p>	<p>All transcriptions are done. Narrative manuscript is ready for edit and turn in before the final date. Is available to work with up-loading text and formatting pictures in text. Travel journal is complete and presentation paper is done.</p>	<p>All transcriptions done. Narrative is ready for first read at least by May 31st. Is accepting of critique and revision recommendations. Travel journal is complete and has a topic for presentation paper.</p>	<p>Working on figuring out interview transcripts. Not sure they can be read. Must be pushed to write narrative and doesn't take much critique. Can't contribute to the overall process because of personal work habits. No idea about a presentation topic.</p>