

HTY 394-0005 (92053), The Vietnam War, spring 2018

Final Examination (take-home)

Due: 4:00 p.m., Thursday, May 10

Your exam must be typed (double-spaced, Times Roman 12-point font, MS Word, each answer 2-3 pages). Place both answers in one document. Be sure your name is on the answer sheet, and identify the file document by your last name and the term "FE" (e.g., "Beam FE").

The exam must be sent as an email attachment to the instructor (chris.beam@maine.edu) no later **than 4:00 p.m., Thursday, May 10, 2018**. The instructor will respond with an acknowledgment within 24 hours. If none is received, try sending the answers again.

Keep in mind the following considerations:

- ▶ Late assignments will be marked down substantially. The reason for this is that the instructor is required to turn in the final course grade within a week of the end of the course. Hence he must have time to review the Final Examinations and calculate the final grade. Unfortunately, instructors are not granted extensions in turning in grades.
- ▶ The Final Examination page in the Assignments section of the course Blackboard site will close at the due time/date.
- ▶ The technical quality of the answers – correct spelling and grammar, clarity of exposition, coherence of organization – will be given considerable weight in calculating the grade. Use the Spell and Grammar Check functions of the MS Word program. Then proof-read the paper – whether on the screen or in print is your preference. For guidance, refer to the Standards for Evaluating Written Work in the Course Information link of the course Blackboard site.
- ▶ Be sure to cite any source you use, including the Herring and Small volumes.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact the instructor.

Answer both parts -- A and B.

A (50 percent).

This story, probably apocryphal, made the rounds during the closing days of the Vietnam war:

When the Nixon administration took office in January 1969, all the data on North and South Vietnam and on the United States were fed into a Pentagon computer -- population, gross national product, manufacturing capacity, number of tanks, ships, and aircraft, size of armed forces, and the like.

The computer was then asked, "*When will the United States win?*"

It took only a few minutes to generate the answer: "*The U.S. won in 1964!*"

[From Harry G. Summers, Jr., *On Strategy: A Critical Analysis of the Vietnam War* [1982], p. 42.]

Discuss the implications of this story in light of what you know about the nature of the U.S. role in Vietnam from 1945 to 1975.

B (50 percent).

Answer either 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5.

1. "When Lyndon Johnson inherited the presidency, he inherited many things. One of them was the legacy of the Vietnam War, and the Democratic presidents' felt need not to lose one square foot of territory to communism, particularly in Asia, to draw the line, to hold the line, and to keep the presidency thereby. Because if you lose, the final domino in the domino sequence is not some Asian country -- it's the presidency itself."

[♦ James Thompson, former member of the National Security Council staff, 1964-1966, interview ca. 1983 for public television documentary *Vietnam: A Television History*.]

Discuss this statement in terms of U.S. decisionmaking on Vietnam during the Kennedy and Johnson administrations.

2. Discuss the effect of the draft on the course of U.S. involvement in Vietnam.
3. Compare the Vietnam policies of Presidents Lyndon B. Johnson and Richard M. Nixon in terms of their goals and the effectiveness of the methods -- political, military, and diplomatic -- they used to achieve them.
4. Analyze the impact of the Tet Offensive both on the Vietnamese conduct of the war in Southeast Asia and on U.S. policies and politics regarding American intervention in Vietnam.
5. What is the relationship between the Watergate scandal and U.S. involvement in Vietnam?