This course is an integrative seminar for students majoring in Peace and Justice Studies. The final piece of work for the course (and the major) is a twenty to thirty page paper on a topic of your choice related to your coursework in Peace and Justice Studies.

As for the first part of the course, I propose the following set of concerns to be investigated.

During the 2004 presidential campaign, one in which, on the one hand, a decorated war hero was portrayed as a liar and, on the other, a war avoider was presented as a brave warrior, I was struck by the amount of chatter from candidates, campaign advertisers, and pundits about the Vietnam War. There were constant references to the lessons of that war, the legacies of that war, the meaning of that war, and the memories of that war. I soon realized (you probably knew that already, but I’m a slow learner) that those questions needed to be asked about all of our nation’s wars. Are there agreed-upon meanings? If there are, what are they? How do we remember them? Do we remember them truly? Why do we remember them in the way that we do?

Looking at our understanding of how we remember wars—then and now—might shed some light on these present undertakings abroad. This won’t be just a history course, but we will refer to history. It won’t just be a discussion of US policy in Iraq and Afghanistan and Libya over the last
decade, but it would be malpractice to avoid those topics. We’ll look at wars in the past century to get at some questions that affect all of us:

What is the US role in the world?
What is my role in the world?
Do any of us have a role in the world?
Does the past help us understand the present? The future? People say that it does. But, between us, does it really?
Did these wars actually matter? To whom? How? Why?
Are there lessons?
Are there legacies?
What is to be done?
What am I supposed to do?
Once you receive your diploma, are you now educated?

Readings

There are five books for this class. All of them are novels. They deal with different conflicts within the last century. Some of the books appeared nearly contemporaneously with the war that was its focus. Others did not. Some were written by veterans of battlefields; others were not. Some are terrific literature; others may not make that grade.

The books (in order of appearance) are:

*Regeneration* by Pat Barker

*The Plague* by Albert Camus

*The Quiet American* by Graham Greene

*Fail-Safe* by Eugene Burdick and Harvey Wheeler

*The Lotus-Eaters* by Tatjana Soli

Written Work

Your seminar paper is a major undertaking, and I am wary of trying to ask you to divide yourself into too many pieces. I have, however, found that writing a short response to a book helps students come to class having
thought about a book—not just having turned the pages. One of the things that I have learned as a teacher is that reading and thinking are not necessarily related. So, I am asking you to write three papers of 2-3 pages each during this first part of the course. I will give you what I hope will be a worthwhile issue to reflect upon.

The capstone paper itself will have two readers. I will act as an advisor/reader for all the papers, and you should select a second reader from the specific area in which you are working. It is not too early to find your second reader. Please do so as soon as possible. Within the next two weeks, please let me know who that will be. While I will be responsible for grading the papers, the second reader will be a content expert. It would be silly to think that I am any kind of an expert on your particular field.

Proceedings

This course will be run along the lines of a professional seminar. While I will take the responsibility for figuring out some of the issues and methods during the first few weeks of the course, your role will, I hope, be an active one. Conspicuous and consistent attendance is essential to the success of this course. Even though you are only required to write about three of the books, the readings are at the heart of what we will be doing in class. I think you will actually find the books worth reading and talking about.

Please let me know if you will not be able to be in class any week.

The other agenda of the course will be to try to be “integrative.” We will, therefore, try to meet two different goals. I will try to structure activities and assignments so that you will work together in class. I recognize that, in your last semester at Tufts, time outside of class will be hard to find. Students working on similar topics will, I hope, have the opportunity to talk about their likeminded research. At the same time, I hope that this topic will challenge you to integrate the understanding and knowledge that you have taken from different courses and bring them to class. Since you are the largest Peace and Justice cohort in history (you may cheer for yourselves), we will try to have you work together in small groups for presentations about your related research projects over the last few weeks of your undergraduate careers.
A few words on these presentations: teaching is not a mere matter of information delivery. Just telling us everything you have learned will not really help us understand it. Just because you told us, that doesn’t mean we learned it! Thinking about what we should know about the topic, why we should know about it, and how you can present it in an interesting and compelling manner will be essential for education actually to take place. Teaching is intellectual work, and it is a skill that you should probably practice at least once before graduating from this university! So, here’s your opportunity. You will have our attention for quite some time. Please teach us well.

PJS 190

What follows is a tentative outline of where we are going over the next few weeks. It is, of course, subject to your approval.

Tuesday January 22

What is this about?

ASSIGNMENT: Barker

Who is sane?

Tuesday January 29

The war to end wars doesn’t

ASSIGNMENT: Camus. Part I and II

Tuesday February 5

Reacting to a crisis.

ASSIGNMENT: Finish Camus

Who is the hero? Are there heroes?

Please write a one-paragraph description of your proposed project.
Tuesday February 12
What am I supposed to do?

ASSIGNMENT: Read Greene
Who is the villain? Are there villains?

Tuesday February 19
Imperialists with clean hands?

ASSIGNMENT: Read Burdick and Wheeler
Was the President’s decision a good one? Was it moral?

Tuesday February 26
Do nuclear weapons break the rules of war?

ASSIGNMENT: Begin Soli

Tuesday March 5
What did it do to those who were there?

ASSIGNMENT: Finish novel
Was Vietnam different from other wars?

Tuesday March 12
What did it do to the rest of us?

ASSIGNMENT: ENJOY YOUR BREAK.

Student presentations will begin on Tuesday, April 2