COURSE NO. COURSE TITLE INSTRUCTOR
320 Early Modern France 1550–1815 Desan

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will cover the history of France from the mid-sixteenth century through the Napoleonic period. The course will begin with an overview of rural life in early modern France. Next it will explore the impact of the Reformation and Wars of Religion, trace the development of the absolute monarchy, and examine the social and political structures of the Old Regime. Emphasis will be placed on social and cultural history as we examine society and culture under Louis XIV and during the Enlightenment. Finally, the course will focus on the causes and character of the French Revolution.

LECTURES

11:00 MWF

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS AND EXAMINATIONS

One Hour-exam
One 5-7 page paper
Final Exam

GRADING SYSTEM

A–F (Final Exam = 40%, Paper and Hour-Exam = 30% each)

REQUIRED READINGS

Montaigne, Selected Essays, ed. by D. Frame, Harlan Davidson
Moliere, Middle Class Gentlemen, Barron
Alexis de Tocqueville, The Old Regime and the French Revolution, Anchor
Week 1 (January 20-24): INTRODUCTION: THE DIVERSITY OF FRANCE

Week 2 (January 27-31): RURAL LIFE IN EARLY MODERN FRANCE
Reading: Goubert, Louis XIV and 20 Million Frenchmen, pp. 7-57.
Selections from N. Z. Davis, The Return of Martin Guerre (R)
**I will show the film "The Return of Martin Guerre" this week.

Week 3 (February 3-7): SIXTEENTH-CENTURY CULTURE
Reading: Montaigne, Selected Essays.
Documents on images of women and on witchcraft (R)

Reading: Dunn selections on French Wars of Religion and Rise of Absolutism and "Vindiciae contra tyrannos" (R)
Goubert, pp. 61-144.

Week 5 (February 17-21): THE ABSOLUTIST STATE
Reading: Goubert, pp. 147-315.
Selection from Louis XIV's letters to his Heirs and from Bossuet (R).

Week 6 (February 24-28): SOCIETY AND CULTURE UNDER LOUIS XIV
Reading: Molière, Middle-Class Gentlemen
Madame de Sévigné, selected letters (R).
Week 7 (March 3-7): SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY
HOUR-EXAM ON FRIDAY, MARCH 7
Reading: Selections from Descartes and Pascal (R).

Week 8 (March 10-14): IN THE WAKE OF LOUIS XIV

Week 9 (March 17-21): THE ORIGINS OF THE ENLIGHTENMENT
Reading: Cobban, pp. 82-151.
Excerpts from The Encyclopedia and Montesquieu's Persian Letters (R).

Week 10 (March 31-April 4): THE ENLIGHTENMENT
Reading: Rousseau, The Social Contract.

Week 11 (April 7-11): REFORM VERSUS REVOLUTION
Reading: Tocqueville, The Old Regime and the French Revolution:
Part 1; Part 2: chs. 1, 2, 8, 9; Part 3: chs. 1, 3, 8.

PAPER DUE, 6-8 pages, topics will involve Rousseau and other
Enlightenment documents

Week 12 (April 14-18): THE OUTBREAK OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION
Reading: Kafker & Laux, The French Revolution: Conflicting
Interpretations, Chapters 1 & 2.
Cobban, pp. 152-200.
Excerpts from Sieyes and Rights of Man (R).

Week 13 (April 21-25): THE RADICAL REVOLUTION
Reading: Kafker & Laux, Chapters 5 & 6.
Cobban, pp. 200-241.
Excerpts from Robespierre, Olympe de Gouges (R).
**I will show the movie "Danton" this week.

Week 14 (April 28-May 2): REVOLUTIONARY CULTURE AND THE DIRECTORY
Reading: Kafker & Laux, Chapters 7 & 8.
Cobban, 241-266.
Lynn Hunt, "The Imagery of Radicalism" (R).

Week 15: NAPOLEON
Reading: Selections from Gordon Wright in (R).