COURSE DESCRIPTION

Analysis of the great age of monarchy between the Thirty Years War and the French Revolution. These years were remarkable for the rise of absolutist kings and queens in Europe, many of whom – Louis XIV of France, Leopold I of Austria, Peter the Great of Russia, and the eighteenth-century “enlightened absolutists” – will be examined at length in this course. We will also discuss the social and economic patterns that marked this period and the spread of new ideas in the Scientific Revolution and Enlightenment. Our central concern will be the ways in which traditional views of politics, society, and culture came under attack in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, as broader trends, including the spread of a commercial economy, gave rise to new questions and concerns in Europe.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The assignments will consist of two class exams, a final exam, three reading tests, and one paper. The class exams and the final exam will include mainly short answer and essay questions, while the reading tests will comprise exclusively short answer questions.

The paper will be 7 – 9 pages in length (2100–2700 words) and is due on May 3. The formal paper assignment will be handed out in mid-February.

GRADING POLICY

The semester grade will be broken into “fifths”: 20% of your semester grade will come from each of the three exams (the two class exams and the final exam), 20% from the average of your three reading tests, and 20% from your paper. Class attendance is strongly recommended as a vital part of student learning but will not result in points deducted from the semester average.
TEXTS

Raymond Birn, *Crisis, Absolutism, Revolution: Europe and the World, 1648 – 1789*  

Cardinal Richelieu, *The Political Testament of Cardinal Richelieu*  

Merry Wiesner-Hanks, *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe*  

Timothy Brook, *Vermeer’s Hat: The Seventeenth Century and the Dawn of the Global World*  

Dorinda Outram, *The Enlightenment*  

Robert Darnton, *The Great Cat Massacre*  

NOTE ABOUT DESIRE2LEARN

This semester we will make use of Desire2Learn for grades and some course content. You can reach the website by going to d2l.sfasu.edu, Click on “log in,” then use the same user ID and password that you would use with MySFA.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY (A-9.1)

*** In this class, you will be required to place all notes, books, back-sacks, purses, etc. at the front of the class before the exam begins.

*** Any student who has an electronic device visible during an exam (in their lap, on their desk, or visible nearby) will receive a zero for their exam grade.

*** No student will be allowed to leave the room during an exam unless they finish and turn in their exam first. If you need to go to the restroom, do so before the exam starts.

Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.
Definition of Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one’s own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one’s paper without giving the author due credit. Please read the complete policy at http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/student_academic_dishonesty.pdf

Students with Disabilities

To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/.

Program Learning Outcomes

The SFA History Department has identified the following Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) for all SFA students earning a B.A. degree in History:

1. The student will evaluate the role of the historian in society.

2. The student will assess the significance of historical events/phenomena and analyze their historical contexts.

3. The student will locate, identify and critically analyze primary and secondary sources appropriate for historical research.

4. The student will interpret evidence found within primary sources and place those sources within their appropriate historical context.

5. The student will effectively communicate historical arguments in support of a central thesis, including the proper citation of sources using the most recent edition of the Chicago Manual of Style.

This course will focus on PLOs 2 and 5.
STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

The more specific outcomes for this particular course are as follows:

1. The student will be able to explain and evaluate the concept of absolutism.
2. The student will be able to explain the special problems that shaped the practice of absolutism.
3. The student will be able to explain why absolutism failed to take root in Great Britain.
4. The student will be able to explain the main characteristics and consequences of the Enlightenment in Europe.

COURSE CALENDAR

Jan 19  δ Introduction

I – EUROPEAN HISTORY, 1648 – 1789: PARAMETERS AND BACKGROUND

Jan 21  δ The legacy of the sixteenth century: religious conflict and commercial expansion

Jan 26  δ Popular culture and the peasantry

Darnton ch. 1

Jan 28  δ Nobles, urban elites, artisans

Feb 2  δ The theory of absolutism & the “crisis” of the 17th century

Richelieu pp. 1 – 47, 67 – 79, 80 – 93, 103 – 128

II – CONSTRUCTING THE ABSOLUTIST MONARCHY IN FRANCE, TO 1715

Feb 4  δ The growth of absolutism in France

First reading test

Feb 9  δ Mazzarin, the Fronde, and the young Louis XIV


Feb 11  δ Louis XIV’s personal rule

Wiesner-Hanks ch. 2
Feb 16  ❖ The demands of war
       Brook ch. 1
Feb 18  First exam

III – CRISIS AND RESOLUTION IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE, 1648 – 1715
Feb 23  ❖ The Habsburg Empire
Feb 25  ❖ Prussia
       Wiesner-Hanks ch. 3
March 1  ❖ Russia: Peter the Great
       Brook chs. 2 – 4

IV – EUROPE AND THE WORLD, 17th & 18th CENTURIES
March 3  ❖ Global expansion and slavery
March 8  ❖ Timothy Brook, Vermeer’s Hat
       Second reading test

V – CONSTITUTIONAL MONARCHY IN ENGLAND, TO 1714
March 10 ❖ The legacy of the Tudors and the reign of James I
       Wiesner-Hanks ch. 5
March 22 ❖ The Puritan Revolution
       Wiesner-Hanks ch. 6
March 29 ❖ Charles II, James II, and the Glorious Revolution
       Wiesner-Hanks ch. 7
March 31  Second Exam
VI – NEW IDEAS

April 5  ∅ Elite and popular cultures converge: the witchhunt to 1715

April 7  ∅ Scientific Revolution & Enlightenment

Outram chs. 2 & 3

April 12 ∅ Enlightenment: the “public sphere” in the eighteenth century

Outram chs. 5 & 9

VII – THE EUROPEAN STATE SYSTEM, 18TH CENTURY

April 14 ∅ The new diplomacy

Third reading test

April 19 ∅ Prussia and the Habsburgs to 1763

April 21 ∅ The France of Louis XV

Darnton ch. 2

VIII – THE OLD ORDER RECONSIDERED

April 28 ∅ Russia: Catherine the Great

April 30 ∅ Enlightened absolutism?: Frederick the Great and Joseph II

Darnton ch. 4

May 3  ∅ Hanoverian Britain from Walpole to Wilkes

** Paper due

May 5  ∅ Attempts at reform in France

Darnton ch. 6

Final examination – Tuesday, May 10, 1:00 – 3:00 pm

*** Note: SFA has scheduled this time for our final exam. No exceptions will be allowed.