

# HIST 158

## Early Modern European History

### 1450–1815

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### *General Description*

#### **Course Objectives**

This course will provide a comprehensive introduction to the social, economic, political, intellectual, and diplomatic history of Europe between 1450 and 1815.

#### **Welcome!**

I'm excited to teach this course and am confident that our experience will be a rewarding one. In the coming months, you will acquaint yourself with the history of early modern Europe from 1450 to 1815. The French Revolution is typically viewed as the pivotal period ushering in the “modern” era of the Western world. Our course examines the period immediately prior, from the Renaissance through the French Revolution itself.

HIST 158, Early Modern European History, 1450–1815, consists of seventeen lessons and a final exam. Each lesson includes a reading assignment, lecture notes, and a written assignment or essay of about two pages. I strongly recommend that you gather your thoughts and draft an outline before you begin your written work. You will send each assignment—typed, double-spaced, spell-checked, with pages numbered—to the Friday Center, which will forward your work to me to grade. Please keep a copy for your records. Once you have completed all of the lesson assignments, you will take a comprehensive final exam.

I will be looking for you to develop your own thoughts and opinions. If you need help, please feel free to contact me with specific questions, or you may do your own research if you know how to use supplementary information without simply echoing the opinions of the sources you consult. A word of warning: Whenever you consult a published work or other outside source of any kind (including Internet sources), you must cite it and give credit to the source (using parentheses in the body of your work or a footnote or endnote). Otherwise, it may be plagiarism, even if you're only borrowing a phrase. As a UNC-Chapel Hill student, you must abide by the Honor Code. Violations of the Honor Code very often stem from a student's lack of confidence or misunderstanding of plagiarism. If you would like more information about the Honor Code, please refer to the Undergraduate Bulletin (online or in print) or visit the following Web site: <http://honor.unc.edu>. And of course please bring any questions you may have to my attention.

A word about me: I received my PhD in history from UNC-Chapel Hill in 1998. I also have an MA in history from UNC-Chapel Hill and a BA in history from Virginia Commonwealth University. I specialize in French history, specifically the human rights movement, and I taught American history in Paris for two years. After earning my PhD, I worked as an academic advisor in the College of Arts and Sciences and General College at UNC-Chapel Hill, so I understand the student experience quite well, having gained a wider perspective than most teachers have. In early 2004, I returned to my hometown of Charlottesville, Virginia, to work at the University of Virginia.

I'm looking forward to working with you. We'll cover fascinating and fun material, from witchcraft to guillotines, and I hope you'll enjoy early modern European history as much as I do.

## **Required Textbooks**

The following textbooks are required for the course:

Palmer, R.R., Joel Colton, and Lloyd Kramer. *A History of the Modern World, Volume 1*, 10th edition (McGraw-Hill, 2007)

Machiavelli, Niccolò. *The Prince* (Penguin, 2003)

Ginzburg, Carlo. *The Night Battles: Witchcraft and Agrarian Cults in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Johns Hopkins, 1992)

Darnton, Robert. *The Great Cat Massacre and Other Episodes in French Cultural History* (Basic Books, 1999)

De Tocqueville, Alexis. *The Old Régime and the French Revolution* (Doubleday Anchor Books, 1983)

You may purchase the texts from the Higher Grounds bookstore at the Friday Center using the book order form in this manual, or online at <https://s4.its.unc.edu/HigherGrounds>.

## **Study Suggestions**

In this course you will be asked to master information and use it to formulate and answer questions about the development of Europe between 1450 and 1815.

Each lesson has three components: assigned text reading, lecture notes, and written work. First, read the assigned text carefully. As you read, pause to reflect on the content of what you are reading. One way to do this is to use the “Reading Guides” that are included in each lesson. Think of the questions in this section as lesson objectives—pointers to what you should have learned and what you should understand at the end of each lesson. While the answers to these questions are not to be turned in, I highly recommend that you jot them down, either in the text or in a special notebook you keep for this purpose. This type of intensive studying takes time, and you will find that it pays off in the long run. A significant portion of the final exam will consist of questions and identifications from this portion of each assignment. If you prepare this material as you go along, you should have little trouble studying for this section of the examination. A final word of advice: Underlining or highlighting passages is a far less effective way of mastering material than summarizing in the margin or elsewhere the gist of a section.

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When you have finished reading and digesting the textbook assignment, read the brief “Lecture Notes” in this manual. This section presents subjects covered in the reading in a somewhat different light or introduces new subjects not discussed in the texts. You will be responsible for material from this section on the examinations as well.

When you have read and digested both the assigned text and lecture notes, you should be ready to do the written work. Each essay should be approximately 500 words, although you should feel free to write more if necessary. Before you begin writing, prepare an outline and clarify for yourself what your basic arguments and conclusions will be. Be sure to include an introduction and conclusion in which you clearly state your arguments. Write your answers in clear, straightforward English prose, following the usually accepted rules of grammar, spelling, and diction for formal composition. Faulty grammar and spelling distract the reader’s attention, and improper use of words makes it difficult or impossible for your reader to understand what you mean. All these are bound to lower your grade.

## **Grading and Final Examination**

The final examination will include short identifications, short-answer questions, and at least one essay. **You must pass the final exam in order to pass the course.** The final exam will count as 25 percent of your final grade.