

**Instructor:** Paul Mazgaj

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**Office Hrs.:** 11:00-11:30 MWF

3:15-3:45 MW

And by Appointment

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course will begin with an overview of the French Enlightenment, often seen as one of the most important sites in the construction of “modernity.” After an attempt to define the Enlightenment against the backdrop of traditionalist assumptions, we will consider various interpretations of the Enlightenment (from Peter Gay’s defense of it as a “recovery of nerve” to Michel Foucault’s critique as the origins of the “disciplinary society”). Next, we will consider one of the thorniest problems facing historians of the period: namely, the relation between the ideas of Enlightenment and the events of the Revolution.

Finally, we will take on the French Revolution itself. Our first concern will be reconstructing a narrative account of the Revolution, from its liberal origins, through the radicalism of the Terror during its middle years, to its thrust onto the larger European stage during the Napoleonic years. Finally, we will examine the great historiographical debates that have engaged several generations of historians over the meaning and significance of the French Revolution.

### **LEARNING GOALS AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES**

At the successful completion of this a course a student should expect:

- to have acquired a general knowledge of the political, social, and cultural history of France in the eighteenth century
- to know how to interpret primary source material and integrate such interpretations into a larger understanding of the period
- to be able evaluate scholarship on the Enlightenment and French Revolution from a wide variety of perspectives
- to be able to analyze and synthesize historical material and to demonstrate these skills in the semester paper and the two essay exams

### **READING LIST:**

#### **1. Books to be purchased:**

Dorinda Outram, *The Enlightenment* (Cambridge)

Jeremy Popkin, *A Short History of the French Revolution* (Prentice Hall)

Lynn Hunt, *Culture, Politics, and Class in the French Revolution*  
(University of California)

#### **2. On Electronic Reserve:**

All the other readings are on Electronic Reserve (ER) and can be

downloaded by going to Blackboard, scrolling down to HIS 567, clicking, then scrolling down to e-reserves (on left) and clicking again.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

**Attendance. Attendance is required not optional.** The class depends on your regular attendance and participation. Only officially certified absences will be accepted. All unexcused absences will affect your grade. *Beyond two, they will seriously affect your grade.*

**Examinations.** A mid-term and a final. Essay format. The final examination will be given on the last day of class.

### **Semester Paper**

**--Requirements for Undergraduate Students.** Recommended length: eight pages. All papers should be typed, double-spaced, and fully documented. The topic should be an *interpretive* problem, selected from topics covered on the course syllabus, and approved by me. The vehicle for this approval will be a short but thoughtfully-conceived and well-written prospectus describing your interpretive problem. You should also include a short bibliography indicating the sources that you intend to use. These sources must include at least one book and two articles beyond the assigned course reading. All sources must be serious pieces of historical scholarship (if in question, check with me). All "due dates" (see below), barring certified medical emergencies or family sickness, are to be taken seriously; late papers will be marked down at the discretion of the instructor.

**--Requirements for Graduate Students.** Recommended length: ten to twelve pages. All papers should be typed, double-spaced, and fully documented. The topic should be an *interpretive* problem, selected from material covered in the course, and approved by me. The vehicle for this approval will be a short but thoughtfully-conceived and well-written prospectus describing your interpretive problem. You should also include a short bibliography indicating the sources that you intend to use. These sources must include at least three books and three articles beyond the assigned course reading. All sources must be serious pieces of historical scholarship (if in question, check with me). All "due dates" (see below), barring certified medical emergencies or family sickness, are to be taken seriously; late papers will be marked down at the discretion of the instructor.

**Discussion.** The readings are keyed to syllabus topics. You should have the readings completed before the day a particular topic is scheduled to be addressed in class; this is especially important for days designated for a discussion of particular readings (indicated by a "D"). Your discussion grade will be determined by the frequency and quality of your contribution to class discussion.

**Grades.** The following elements will determine the final grade:

mid-term exam--30%  
 final exam--30%  
 paper--30%  
 discussion grade--10%

**--Undergraduate Grading Scale.** The undergraduate grading scale cut-off are as follows:

A+	97	C	73
A	93	C-	70
A-	90	D+	67
B+	87	D	63
B	83	D-	60
B-	80	F	59
C+	77		

**--Graduate Grading Scale.** The graduate grading scale is the same as the undergraduate scale with two exceptions: first, "A" is the highest possible grade; second, "C" is the lowest possible passing grade (anything below a "C" is recorded as an "F").

**Plagiarism and the Academic Honor Code.** Plagiarism is a serious academic crime that occurs when someone uses the words or ideas of someone else without giving that person credit in a formal citation. Punishment for violations are outlined in the Academic Integrity Policy. For an explanation see the UNCG website under "Academic Integrity Policy."

### **CLASS SCHEDULE OF READING ASSIGNMENTS:**

\*=books to be purchased

ER=reading on electronic reserve and can be downloaded from Blackboard

(D)=discussion day; be prepared

### **PART I: THE ENLIGHTENMENT**

**Aug. 20:** Introduction

**22:** The Enlightenment Worldview I

**Reading:** Kant and D'Alembert, "The Enlightenment Spirit" in Isaac Kramnick, *The Enlightenment Reader*, pp. 1-17

**27:** The Enlightenment Worldview II

**29:** Peter Gay's Enlightenment (D)

**Reading:** Peter Gay, "The Recovery of Nerve" in *The Enlightenment*, Vol. 2, pp. 3-29; 56-69; 98-122, ER

**Sept. 3: Labor Day****5:** Michel Foucault's Enlightenment (D)**Reading:** Michel Foucault, "Discipline and Punish," pp. 3-16; 195-228, ER and Robert Darnton, "The Case for the Enlightenment" in *George Washington's False Teeth*, pp. 3-24, ER**Sept. 10:** The Ancien Régime I**12:** The Ancien Régime II**Due:** Semester Paper Prospectus**Sept. 17:** The Ancien Régime: III**19:** Discussion: The Enlightenment in Recent Scholarship (D)**Reading:** \*Dorinda Outram, *The Enlightenment*, complete**24:** Enlightened Political Thought: Voltaire and Montesquieu**Reading:** Rousseau, Voltaire and Condorcet, "Essays on Progress" in Kramnick, *The Enlightenment Reader*, pp. 363-78; 387-95

ER

**26:** Enlightened Political Thought: Rousseau**Reading:** Locke, Montesquieu, Voltaire, and Rousseau, "Politics and the State" in Kramnick, *The Enlightenment Reader*, pp. 395-441

ER

**Oct. 1:** From Enlightenment to Revolution: The Darnton Thesis (D)**Reading:** Robert Darnton, "The High Enlightenment and the Low-Life of Literature..." in Jack Censer, *The French Revolution and Intellectual History*, pp.47-74, ER**3:** From Enlightenment to Revolution: Baker and Discourse Theory (D)**Reading:** Keith Baker, "Ideological Origins of the French Revolution" in Ronald Schechter, *The French Revolution*, pp. 52-74 ER**8:** From Enlightenment to Revolution: Habermas and the "Public Sphere" (D)**Reading:** Roger Chartier, "Cultural Origins of the French Revolution" in Schechter, *The French Revolution*, pp. 79-105 ER**10: MID-TERM EXAM****15: FALL BREAK****PART II: THE REVOLUTION****Oct. 17:** The Collapse of the Old Regime**Reading:** \*Jeremy Popkin, *Short History of the French Revolution*, chapters 1-2

- 22:** The Liberal Revolution, 1789-1791  
**Reading:** \*Popkin, *Short History of the French Revolution*, chapter 3 and Olympe de Gouges, "The Rights of Women" in Kramnick, *The Enlightenment Reader*, pp. 609-18 ER
- 24:** The Collapse of the Liberal Regime, 1791-1792  
**Reading:** \*Popkin, *Short History of the French Revolution*, chapter 4 and Robert Forster, "The French Revolution, People of Color, Slavery" in Klaitz and Haltzel, *The Global Ramifications of the French Revolution*, pp. 89-104 ER
- and
- Oct. 29:** The Radical Republic, 1792-1794  
**Reading:** \*Popkin, *Short History of the French Revolution*, chapter 5
- 31 :** Robespierre, the Terror, and After  
**Reading:** Peter McPhee, "The Terror: Revolutionary Defence or Paranoia?" in McPhee, *The French Revolution, 1789-1799*, chapter 7 ER and \*Popkin, *Short History of the French Revolution*, chapter 6
- Nov. 5:** The Napoleonic Aftermath  
**Reading:** \*Popkin, *Short History of the French Revolution*, chapters 7-9

### **PART III: DEBATING THE REVOLUTION**

- Nov. 7:** Marxist Orthodoxy  
**Reading:** Albert Soboul, "The French Revolution in the History of the Contemporary World," in Gary Kates, *The French Revolution: Recent Debates and New Controversies*, pp. 23-43, ER
- 12:** The Revisionist Wave I: The Offensive of the Social Historians (D)  
**Reading:** Colin Lewis, "Nobles, Bourgeois, and the Origins of the Revolution," in Gary Kates (ed.), *The French Revolution: Recent Debates and New Controversies*, pp. 44-67, ER
- 14:** The Revisionist Wave II: The Offensive of the Cultural Historians (D)  
**Reading:** François Furet, "Interpreting the French Revolution," in Schechter, *The French Revolution*, pp. 31-51
- 19:** Debating Furet (D)  
**Reading:** Robert Darnton, "Diffusion vs. Discourse" in Darnton, *The Forbidden Best-Sellers of Pre-Revolutionary France*, pp. 169-180 ER and Timothy Tackett, "The Constituent Assembly and the Terror," in Keith Baker, *The French Revolution and the Creation of Modern Political Culture*,

Vol. 4: *The Terror*, pp.39-54 ER

**21: THANKSGIVING**

**26:**The Revisionist Wave at High Tide (D)

**Reading:** \*Lynn Hunt, *Politics, Culture, and Class in the French Revolution*, pp. 1-119

**28:** The Revolution in Images: Side Show

**Due:** Semester Paper

**Dec. 3:** The Bicentennial Year--1989: Is the Revolution Over Yet?

**5:** Loose Ends and Evaluations

**10: FINAL EXAM**