

HISTORY 240A: Europe from the Renaissance to the French Revolution

COURSE OUTLINE 2019

Subject to change

Instructor: Professor R.S. Alexander

Office: Clearihue B220

Tele: 721-7391

email: rsa@uvic.ca

Office Hours: 12:30-2:00 on Wednesdays, or by appointment.

This survey consists of a broad narrative of principal developments in Europe during the early-modern era (roughly from the end of the Middle Ages to 1800). It links developments in international relations to political, social, cultural, and economic change in the leading states of continental Europe. In addition to discussion of how historians examine the past, it provides an introduction to a wide range of subjects which students can subsequently pursue in more detail in upper-level courses.

Required Reading

John Merriman, *A History of Modern Europe: From the Renaissance to the Age of Napoleon*, 4th edition (New York: W.W. Norton & Company). This is a survey text that provides general background & serves as a complement to the lectures.

Merry Wiesner, Andrew Evans, William Bruce Wheeler, and Julius Ruff, *Discovering the Western Past: a look at the evidence, since 1500*, volume II, 7th edition (Cengage Learning, 2015). This book is specifically for seminars.

Marks

a) Term Essay - 35%.

b) Final Exam - 35%. Two Hours in Duration.

c) In-Class Tests – 20% (there are two of them; so, 10% for each).

d) Seminars - 10% (for participation). There are four of them; so 2.5 marks for each one.

*** To pass this course, students must submit the term essay & write the final exam.

Term Essay: I will provide a list of topics, but you can make up your own one provided I approve it. The essay should be approximately 2,500 words (around 10-12 pages) in length.

Exam: the Final Exam will be based on the lectures and readings of the entire term. In the final class of the term, I will discuss how to prepare for it. The Exam will be composed of two sections. In each section you will be asked to choose from a certain number of essay questions.

In-Class Tests: There are two of them. The first one will be based on materials covered in Parts A & B of the schedule; the second test will be based on materials covered in Parts C & D of the schedule. The tests will consist of a choice of identification questions wherein you will be asked to describe the historical significance of something. In essence, you

should write the equivalent of an encyclopaedia entry, explaining why something was important.

Seminars: you will be expected to attend four seminar classes in the term. They provide an opportunity for discussion & you will be marked for your participation in each one.

Topics

* There may be some variation, but the topics covered will largely consist of the following.

Part A: The Renaissance and Reformation

Intro

The late Middle Ages: General Characteristics

Rebirth: The Italian Renaissance

The Renaissance in Northern Europe

State Formation in the West: the 'New Monarchies' of Spain & France

State Formation in Central & Northern Europe

Hegemon?: Charles V & the Era of the Protestant Reformation #1

Hegemon?: Charles V & the Era of the Protestant Reformation #2

Part B: The Wars of Religion

New Worlds?: Spanish & Portuguese Overseas Empire

Europe Divided: Religious & Civil War

Seminar I: 'The Spread of the Reformation'.

Philip II Part 1: War with the Ottomans & Dutch Revolt

Philip II: Part 2: Spanish Armada & Economic Collapse

The Thirty Years War: Part 1: Devastation in Central Europe

The Thirty Years War: Part 2: French Ascendancy in the West

In-Class Test: Covers Parts A & B Only

Part C: The Age of Louis XIV

Absolutism in 17th-Century France

Seminar II: 'Staging Absolutism'.

The Cost of Glory: the Wars of Louis XIV, 1661-1715

Pursuit of Power in the North: Russia & Sweden in the 17th Century

Part D: The Era of the Enlightenment & French Revolution

The Enlightenment & the Age of Reason

Enlightened Despotism: Prussia & Russia

Seminar III: Groups A & B: 'The Mind of an Age: Science and Religion Confront

Eighteenth-Century Natural Disaster'.

Reform & the State in 18th-Century Austria and France

Inter-State Relations in the 18th Century: the Balance of Power

Liberty?: The French Revolution: Part I

Equality?: The French Revolution: Part II

Fraternity?: The French Revolution: Part III

Seminar IV: Groups A & B: 'A Day in the French Revolution: July 14, 1789'.
In-Class Test: Covers Parts C & D Only
Conclusion & Exam Preparations