

**History 121C/French 154C:
History of France, 1515-1715**

Prof. Hilary Bernstein
Fall 2013
MW 2-3:15 p.m.
HSSB 4020

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Office hrs: W 10 a.m.-noon

Course website: http://www.history.ucsb.edu/courses/course.php?course_id=2205

Description:

France was a large, populous, and important country in the early modern period. From the reign of Francis I to that of Louis XIV, it grew in cultural influence and played an important role in the major changes associated with the Renaissance, Reformation, Catholic Reformation, Scientific Revolution, and development of European monarchy. This course focuses on these major changes in the areas of politics, religion, society, and culture of the period, and particularly seeks to understand the relationships between them. What did the development of rival versions of Christianity mean for a society that saw political authority as resting in divine approval? Was religious violence inevitable or did it arise from specific choices made by those in positions of power? How did French monarchs adapt their styles of rule and did these choices reflect or affect broader evolutions in society and culture? How "absolute" was Louis XIV, and did his reign really presage the rise of the modern state? As we grapple with our own conceptions of the relationship between politics, religion, and social choices, it is instructive to understand the ways that these values were both mutually reinforcing and at odds in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century France.

Requirements:

Lecture and Discussion:

This course is organized as a lecture course with periodic discussions to be held during class. Attendance at lectures is required. You are permitted to miss 2 classes without penalty, but more absences will affect your participation grade. The discussions will typically last 25-30 minutes and will occur roughly once every week-and-a-half. They will focus on the main readings and are designed to relate them to the topics discussed in the lectures. You will be informed ahead of time when these discussions will take place, so that you can be sure to have prepared the relevant readings. You may be asked to prepare very short assignments during the quarter to facilitate discussion. There are also three films scheduled for this course. They will be shown on Monday, October 21st, Wednesday, November 13th and Monday, November 25th at 7 p.m. in HSSB 4020. If you cannot attend these films, you must make arrangements to see them yourself.

The Readings:

The required texts for the class are listed below. You may obtain them at the UCSB Bookstore, and a copy of each has been placed on 2-hour reserve at Davidson Library.

William Beik, *Louis XIV and Absolutism: A Brief Study with Documents* (Bedford/St. Martins, 2000)

Gayle K. Brunelle, *Samuel de Champlain: Founder of New France: A Brief History with Documents* (Bedford/St. Martins, 2012)

Barbara B. Diefendorf, *Beneath the Cross: Catholics and Huguenots in Sixteenth-Century Paris* (Oxford, 1991)

Henry Bertram Hill, trans., *The Political Testament of Cardinal Richelieu* (University of Wisconsin, 1961)

Mack P. Holt, *The French Wars of Religion, 1562-1629*, 2d. edition (Cambridge, 2005)

Additionally, there is a course packet, available at Associated Students. This packet may also be consulted on reserve at Davidson Library.

Graded Work:

In this course, you will be asked to write three short papers and take a final exam. The first paper will be of 4-5 pages and will be due on Monday, October 21st; the midterm paper will be of 5-6 pages and will be due on Monday, November 4th; the third paper will be of 4-5 pages and will be due on Wednesday, November 20th. The final exam is scheduled for Monday, December 9th from 4-7 p.m. In order to pass this course, you must complete each of these assignments as well as attend class regularly. Late papers will be marked down one-third of a grade per day, except in cases of dire emergency. Final grades will be determined using the following percentages:

Class attendance and participation: 15%

First paper: 15%

Midterm paper: 25%

Third paper: 20%

Final exam: 25%

Week 1: France under Its Renaissance Monarchs

Mon. Sept 30: France in 1515

Wed. Oct 2: War, Politics, and Society under Francis I and Henry II

Readings: R.J. Knecht, *French Renaissance Monarchy* (packet)

Claude de Seyssel, *The Monarchy of France* (packet)

David Potter, "Cavalry and the Nobility at War" (packet)

Week 2: The French Renaissance

Mon. Oct 7: The Impact of Italy: Renaissance at Court

Wed. Oct 9: French Catholics, French Evangelicals

Readings: Marguerite de Navarre, *Heptameron* (packet)

Pierre de Brantôme, "Marguerite de Valois, Queen of Navarre" (packet)

François Rabelais, *Gargantua and Pantagruel* (packet)

Mack Holt, *French Wars of Religion*, 7-49

Week 3: Calvinist Reform and Its Impact

Mon. Oct 14: Reform Calvin-Style

Wed. Oct 16: The Impact of Calvinism: Social Influences and Religious War;

Readings: Jean Calvin, *On God and Political Duty* (packet)

"Edict of Saint-Germain, 17 January 1562" (packet)

Holt, *French Wars of Religion*, 50-75

Week 4: Religious Massacre and Its Consequences

Mon. Oct 21: The Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre and the Wars of Religion;

First Paper Due; Film, "Queen Margot" at 7 p.m.

Wed. Oct 23: Is the King to Blame? Reactions to the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre

Readings: Diefendorf, *Beneath the Cross* (entire)
Holt, *French Wars of Religion*, 76-122

Week 5: The End of Religious War and Reason of State

Mon. Oct 28: The Catholic League, Henry IV, and the Edict of Nantes

Wed. Oct 30: Reason of State: Monarchy and its Challenges in the time of Richelieu

Readings: “The Edict of Nantes” and “Secret articles” (packet)

Holt, *French Wars of Religion*, 123-77, 195-222

Three documents for midterm paper to be chosen from: Barbara B. Diefendorf, *The Saint Bartholomew’s Day Massacre: A Brief History with Documents* (reserve)

Week 6: Faith, Reason, and Order in the Seventeenth Century

Mon. Nov 4: The Century of Saints: Catholic Reform and the Search for Order;

Midterm paper due

Wed. Nov 6: The “New Philosophy:” Reason, Faith, and Social Space

Readings: Richelieu, *Political Testament* (entire)

Holt, *French Wars of Religion*, 178-94

Week 7: The French Abroad

Mon. Nov 11: **No class; Armistice Day**

Wed. Nov 13: The French Abroad: Mission, Commerce, and Empire;

Film, “Black Robe” at 7 p.m.

Readings: Brunelle, ed., *Samuel de Champlain: Founder of New France* (entire)

Michel de Montaigne, *Essays*, selections (packet)

Week 8: New Perspectives in Politics and Thought

Mon. Nov 18: Order at Home and Abroad

Wed. Nov 20: The Fronde: Prelude to Absolutism? **Second Paper Due.**

Readings: William Beik, *Louis XIV and Absolutism*, 1-107

Week 9: Absolutism: What’s In an Image?

Mon. Nov 25: Versailles and Paris: the Culture(s) of Absolutism; **Film, “Vatel” at 7 p.m.**

Wed. Nov 27: **No class; Happy Thanksgiving**

Readings: Beik, *Louis XIV and Absolutism*, 156-65, 199-218

Week 10: Religion and State: A Resolution?

Mon. Dec 2: Jansenists and Huguenots under Louis XIV

Wed. Dec 4: Conclusions

Readings: Beik, *Louis XIV and Absolutism*, 166-98