This course offers an introduction to French history from roughly 1450 until roughly 1650, a period in which the kingdom was transformed by a series of interrelated changes. These include, but are not restricted to, the printing revolution, successive reinventions of monarchy and governance, the influence of humanism, the religious controversies of the Reformation, convulsive civil wars, the beginnings of French overseas empire and the reshaping of a whole range of social, cultural, family, religious and political norms.

I plan to lecture roughly two times a week, and the third class of the week will be a workshop/seminar style discussion section where we will discuss primary sources, or important historical articles. I hope that you will learn not only the narrative of the period, but also begin to understand some of the historiographical issues that engage historians who conduct research in the period. Although the class does not have a requirement for a reading knowledge of French, students are encouraged to take advantage of opportunities to read French materials if they have the ability to do so. All students of early modern French history should know that for more advanced study of the subject French is essential in order to read primary source material and much of the secondary literature, and that knowledge of Latin and modern European languages other than French is also highly desirable.

Required Texts
Available for Purchase at the Bookstore


Assignments

Paper One: 25 %: Historical Interpretations, 6-8 Pages: Due Friday, 10th October in class.
In 6 to 8 pages, compare the articles in one of the groups below. Answer the question, “What do these essays teach us about the history of early modern France?” Consider whether, how and why the historians differ. Do those contrasts result from varying regional, chronological or confessional conditions, the use of different source material, or from divergent interpretive frameworks? Can the historians’ work be reconciled? If so, how? Do their disagreements pose further questions for research?

All the articles are available in full text through the library in electronic form.

Group One: Peasant Politics?


Group Two: Women and the Social Order

Leslie Tuttle,”From Cloister to Court: Nuns and the Gendered Culture of Disputing in Early Modern France,” Journal of Women’s History. 22, 2 (Summer, 2010); 11-33.


Group Three: Legal Reform & Monarchial Power


Group Four: Violence and identity in the Religious Wars


Paper Two: 25 %: Montaigne, Bodin and their Contexts, 6-8 Pages: Due Monday, 24th November in class.
In six to eight pages, read the selections indicated and answer one of the following questions:

1. Read the first sections of Montaigne’s Travel Journal, say—pp. 1056-1112. You are free, however to read more. Answer either: a: How does Montaigne perceive religious difference? Or b: What differences between European locales does Montaigne find interesting and significant?

2. Read Book I, Essay 20, “That to philosophize is to learn to die,” 67-82 and Book III, Essay 2. “Of Repentance,”, 740-753. Does religion play the same role in the two essays, or has Montaigne’s view of his soul changed as he grew older?


5. Read Book I, Essay 28, “Of Friendship,” 164-176 and Book III, Essay 8, “Of the art of discussion,” 854-876. For Montaigne, is friendship an alternative to politics, or the most important part of it?

6. Read Jean Bodin’s On the Demon-Mania of Witches. Answer either a.) Why does Bodin invoke both the authority of non-Christian and Christian authors to discuss the power and nature of witchcraft? Or b.) How does Bodin distinguish between legitimate means of seeking the truth and demonic power?

You are more than welcome to write on another topic of interest to you, should your fancy take you to another essay or other part of Montaigne’s work. Please do consult with me, however, at least a week before the paper is due.

Workshop preparation: 20%. Five, due at the beginning of the workshop in which the reading will be discussed. No late assignments will be permitted.
Write a question and a paragraph long observation about the reading assigned for the day; the paragraph need not answer your question, but may address another facet of the readings.
Final Examination: 30%. The exam will consist of map sections, identifications, interpretations of textual gobbets, and a broad synthetic essay.

A note on academic honesty: Education and scholarship depends upon a certain sort of basic honesty. I expect that when you claim to have done work, you will actually have done it. When you use the work or ideas of another scholar or student, you should respect them by treating their work fairly and accurately, and give them public credit by citing them openly. Always err on the side of giving too much credit to others than too little. In formal essays, I prefer citations in footnotes using the form known as the Chicago humanities style; see the quick guide at http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html.

The University cares about academic honesty as well, because it has to maintain a standard of fairness and equity. You can find its mandate on “Plagiarism and Cheating” and on “Examination Impersonation” in the section on “Academic Integrity” of General Academic Regulations of the University Undergraduate Calendar (http://crscalprod1.cc.umanitoba.ca/Catalog/ViewCatalog.aspx), but the Faculty of Arts requires me to repeat it here, as well.

"The common penalty in Arts for plagiarism on a written assignment is a grade of F on the paper and a final grade of F (DISC) (for Disciplinary Action) for the course. For the most serious acts of plagiarism, such as purchase of an essay and repeat violations, this penalty can also include suspension for a period of up to five (5) years from registration in courses taught in a particular department/program in Arts or from all courses taught in this Faculty. The Faculty also reserves the right to submit student work that is suspected of being plagiarized to Internet sites designed to detect plagiarism or to other experts for authentication.

The common penalty in Arts for academic dishonesty on a test or examination is F for the paper, F (DISC) for the course, and a one-year suspension from courses acceptable for credit in the Faculty. For more serious acts of academic dishonesty on a test or examination, such as repeat violations, this penalty can also include suspension for a period of up to five years from registration in courses taught in a particular department or program in Arts or from all courses taught in or accepted for credit by this Faculty."

Marking: I will make every effort to return papers within a week, and you will thus have considerable feedback before the voluntary withdrawal (VW) date of November 12, 2014. I will take into account the quality and diligence of research, the creativity, strength, and coherence of thought and argument, and the correct use of grammar, usage, proofreading and citation. Since this is a course that meets the University Senate’s W requirement, students must complete all essay assignments with a passing grade to pass the course. Extensions will not be granted except in highly unusual circumstances, which will usually require documentation. 4% a day will be deducted for unexcused lateness.

A+, 90-100 %: Exceptional: Astonishingly excellent work, which demonstrates originality and a singular command of the subject.
A, 80-89 %. Truly excellent work, free from errors.
B+, 75-79 %. Very good work.
B. 70-75 %. Good.
C+, 65-69 %. Satisfactory.
C. 60-64 %.
D. 50-59 %.
F. 0-49 %.
Other things the Faculty thinks you should know: “Students who wish to appeal a grade given for term work must do so within 10 working days after the grade for the term work has been made available to them.” If you do not pick up your work for four months after the end of the course, you will not only lose the incalculable benefits of my comments, but, as the Faculty puts it, the work “will become the property of the Faculty of Arts and will be subject to confidential destruction.”

Useful References

Databases: Historical abstracts and Iter are useful bibliographies to find journal articles, books and dissertations about French history in this period. More complete bibliographic information can be found in the Bibliographie annuelle de l’Histoire de France.

Journals: The standard English journals on French history are French Historical Studies and French history. The second journal, published in England, tends to have more content on early modern subjects. Book reviews are available at H-France, on line. Articles also appear in a wide range of other historical journals in English, but Sixteenth Century Journal and Renaissance Quarterly contain a particular concentration of articles and book reviews.


Reading Schedule, Workshops, and Lectures
Subject to modification

R&RF=Holt, ed. Renaissance and Reformation France.

F: 5 September: Introduction

I

M: 8 Sept: Diversity
W: 10 Sept: Constructing unity

II

M: 15 Sept: Printing
W: 17 Sept: Humanism

III
Read: Barbara B. Diefendorf, “Gender and the family,” in R & RF 99-118.

M: 22 Sept: Renaissance Monarchy

IV
Read: Philip Benedict and Virginia Reinburg, “Religion and the Sacred,” in R &RF, 119-146.

M: 29 Sept: Reform to Mid Century
W: 1 Oct: Mid Century Dynamics
F: 3 Oct: Workshop IV: Read excerpts from Calvin.

V
M: 6 Oct: Late Reign of Francis I
W: 8 Oct: Inevitable war?
VI

M: 13 October: Thanksgiving: No class.
W: 15 October: Outbreak of War
F: 17 Oct: No class.

VII

M: 20 October; First and Second Wars
W: 22 October: St. Bartholomew

VIII
Read: Jean Bodin, On the Demon-Mania of Witches.

M: 27 October: Governance?
W: 29 October: Demons & Order
F: 31 October WORKSHOP VII: Jean Bodin, Demon-Mania.

IX
Read: Barbara Diefendorf and Virginia Reinburg, “Catholic Reform and religious Coexistence,” in R &RF, 176-201.

M: 3 November: Trent, Jesuits and Reason of State
W: 5 November: Assassination

X
No Set Readings for this week, work on Paper #2.

M: 10 November: Henri IV
W: 12 November: Bourbon visions of order
F: 16 November: No class.

XI
Read: Mack Holt, “Redrawing the Lines of Authority,” in R & RF, 202-228.

M: 17 November: Assassination and Regency
W: 19 November: Charting Cultural Change
XII
Read: Mack Holt, “Conclusion,” in R &RF, 229-233.

M: 24 November: Paper # 2 Due: Richelieu
W: 26 November: Fronde
F: 18 November: WORKSHOP X: Richelieu, Political testament.

XIII
M: 1 December: Retrospect
W: 3 December: Review and Exam Discussion