HONORS 2406
European Civilization from 1400 to 1789: The Birth of the Modern World
Spring 2024

Lecture: W 3:30-5:00 pm, 135 French House
Seminar: 2406.60 (Stoner): W 5:00-6:20 pm, 200 French House
Seminar: 2406.900 (Ray): W 5:00-6:20 pm, 221 French House

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Instructors:</th>
<th>Gabrielle Ray (Honors)</th>
<th>James Stoner (Political Science)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Office hours:</td>
<td>T 12:30-2:30 pm, and by appointment</td>
<td>M 2:00-4:00 pm, W 9:00-10:00 am, and by appointment</td>
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Course Overview
HNRS 2406 is an interdisciplinary course that explores European thought and culture between the Renaissance and the French Revolution. Our focus will be on the invention of the idea of the modern individual and the emerging science of nature and the state.

HNRS 2406 will expand and deepen the knowledge students have acquired in HNRS 2000, Critical Analysis, by uncovering the historical and philosophical “back story” of contemporary debates that are shaping life in our time.

Classes will generally be divided into (1) a joint lecture by one of the instructors on the day’s text and its context, followed by (2) text-based discussion in seminar. Because thoughtful discussion and debate—with each other, with professors, with authors and texts—are essential to the processes of critical analysis, doing the assigned reading before class and regular attendance and active participation in class are expected. If you are unable to attend class, for whatever reason, notify your professor before the class begins.

REQUIRED TEXTS (Students should purchase only these translations for use in HNRS 2406; additional texts are posted on Moodle)

- Pedro Calderón de la Barca, *Life is a Dream* (Dover) [ISBN 9780486421247]
- René Descartes, *Discourse on Method*, tr. Richard Kennington (Focus Publishing) [ISBN 9781585102594]
- Juana Inés de la Cruz, *Poems, Protest, and a Dream: Selected Writings* (Penguin) [ISBN 9780140447033]

[available free online but can also be ordered in book form]

Integrative Learning Core and General Education: Integrated learning allows students to make simple connections among ideas and experiences and across disciplines and perspectives. The LSU Integrative Learning Core (ILC) curriculum is designed to develop student abilities to transfer their learning to new situations and demonstrate a sense of self as a learner. A fundamental goal of the ILC is to foster students’ practical and intellectual capacities associated with integrative learning in preparation for high competence and functionality in their post-baccalaureate careers. This course fulfills the BoR Area of Humanities and Social/Behavioral Sciences and provides students experience with the ILC proficiency of Intercultural Knowledge and Competence.
Weekly Topics and Readings

Jan. 17  LECTURE: Introduction: Europe in 1450
        READING: Walker Percy, “The Delta Factor,” sections 1-5 [Moodle]

I. RENAISSANCE AND REFORMATION

Jan. 24  LECTURE: Reimagining the World
        READING: More, Utopia

Jan. 31  LECTURE: Real Worlds and their Rulers
        READING: Machiavelli, The Prince

***FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 2: ESSAY 1 DUE ***

Feb. 7  LECTURE: Of God and Man
        READING: Martin Luther, On the Freedom of a Christian
                 John Fisher, “Sermon against the Pernicious Doctrines of Martin Luther”

Feb. 14  LECTURE: Shakespeare’s New World
                 Shakespeare, The Tempest

Feb. 21  LECTURE: Mastering the Stars: Virtue, Autonomy, and Man’s Manipulation of Fate
         READING: Pedro Calderon, Life is a Dream

II. THE BIRTH OF MODERN SCIENCE

Feb. 28  LECTURE: A New Way of Knowing and New Things Known
        READING: Descartes, Discourse on Method
                 Pascal, Pensées [excerpts on Moodle]
Mar. 6  MIDTERM EXAM

LECTURE: Man as Matter


{SPRING BREAK MARCH 11-15}

Mar. 20  LECTURE: Sword & Scepter: The Sovereign as God's Lieutenant on Earth


Mar. 27  LECTURE: Equality & Science

READING: Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, “Response to Sor Filotea”

***MONDAY, APRIL 1: ESSAY 2 DUE***

Apr. 3  LECTURE: Life, Liberty, & Property: The Social Contract Reconstrued

READING: Locke, *Second Treatise*, ch. 1-5, 7-9, 13-14, 16-19
Declaration of Independence

III. THE ENLIGHTENMENT AND THE OLD REGIME

Apr. 10  LECTURE: Is This the Best Possible World?

READING: Voltaire, *Candide*

Apr. 17  LECTURE: Nature versus Nurture

READING: J. J. Rousseau, *A Discourse on Inequality*

Apr. 24  LECTURE: The Bounty of Enlightenment

READING: *Encyclopedia* [Moodle: selections]

***MONDAY, APRIL 29: ESSAY 3 DUE***

May 1  LECTURE: Presaging Revolution

READING: Beaumarchais, *The Marriage of Figaro*
**Course Assignments:**

- Weekly Quizzes on the Readings (13) 10%
- 3 Essays (due Feb. 2, Apr. 1, Apr. 29) 35%
- Class Participation 15%
- Midterm Exam (W, Mar. 6, during class) 15%
- Final Exam (Sa, May 11, 10:00 am - noon) 25%

**Grading scale:**

- A+ (98%-100%), A (93%-97%), A- (90%-92%)
- B+ (88%-90%), B (83%-87%), B- (80%-82%)
- C+ (78%-80%), C (73%-77%), C- (70%-72%)
- D+ (68%-70%), D (63%-67%), D- (60%-62%)
- F (below 60%)

**Attendance, Integrity, and Access**

University education is a great privilege, offered to all with the ability and the willingness to learn, without obstacles based on race, sex, or other aspects of personal identity. Students would be foolish to squander their opportunity by unexcused absence from class or by academic dishonesty. Please consult the following LSU policies:

- Attendance: PS-22, Student Absence from Class
  [https://www.lsu.edu/policies/ps/ps_22.pdf](https://www.lsu.edu/policies/ps/ps_22.pdf)
- Integrity: Code of Student Conduct, section 10.1
  [https://www.lsu.edu/saa/students/codeofconduct.php](https://www.lsu.edu/saa/students/codeofconduct.php)
- Access: Division of Engagement, Civil Rights, and Title IX

Students who are struggling in the course should first contact the instructors. Should students want additional assistance, they are encouraged to contact the [Center for Academic Success](https://www.lsu.edu/).