

HIST 495: Writing the Age of Revolutions

I. Course Information

Instructor Info:

Dr. T. Cole Jones

Email: colejones@purdue.edu

Office: UNIV 222

Class Time and Location:

Monday, Wednesday, Friday

2:30-3:20 PM

UNIV 319

Office Hours:

Mondays and Wednesdays 1:30-2:30

or by appointment

Course Website:

Blackboard

II. Course Description

The late eighteenth century witnessed a series of profound political, social, economic, military, diplomatic, and cultural changes that reverberated around the globe and shaped the world we live in today. This course will explore this dynamic period by analyzing the ways in which historians have interpreted the causes, conduct, and consequences of the American, French, and Haitian Revolutions. We will read both classic and emerging scholarship in order to assess the relationship between all three revolutions as well as their contested legacies. Throughout, we will consider the advantages and disadvantages of viewing these revolutions in comparative perspective. Finally, this course will not only cover the lives of famous revolutionaries, celebrated generals, and “founding fathers”; it will also consider the role of ordinary people in influencing these extraordinary times. Students will learn to evaluate historiography, to formulate historical research questions, and to conduct primary source research. This course will culminate in the production of an original piece of scholarship that illuminates a significant theme in the Age of Revolutions.

III. Learning Outcomes

By the end of the semester you will have:

1. Increased your knowledge of the key events, themes, and problems in the histories of the American, French, and Haitian Revolutions.

2. Learned about the wide-ranging global, as well as local, causes, components, and consequences of these revolutions.
3. Formulated a historical research question.
4. Analyzed and contextualized historical evidence (primary sources).
5. Evaluated and incorporated relevant historiography (secondary sources).
6. Crafted an original argument that advances our understanding of some aspect of these revolutions in comparative perspective.
7. Improved your oral and written communication skills as well as your critical thinking skills.
8. Appreciated the enduring influence of these revolutions for our contemporary world.

IV. Course Requirements

1. Attendance and Active Participation—**20%**

Attendance and active participation are required. If you have trouble participating in class, please come see me early on so we can strategize solutions.

2. Research Topic Proposal—**15%**

Due: February 28 via email

You will produce a two-page paper proposal that outlines your historical topic, the question driving your research, the relevant historiography, and your hypothesis.

3. Document Analysis Presentation —**15%**

Due: March 9-13

Each student will uncover a primary source relevant to his/her research question and present it in class. It is your job to make the source intelligible to your fellow students. Who is the creator? What do we know about his/her background? What is going on at the time when the piece was produced? Who is the creator's audience? What is his/her main point? Why is it significant? How does it help you better understand your topic? This assignment will hone your public speaking and presentation skills while preparing you for the rigorous analysis required for the final paper.

4. Rough Draft—**20%**

Due: April 10 via email

Over the course of the semester, you will research and write a **15-20-page original paper** on a topic of your choosing. This paper will adopt a comparative perspective. You must analyze your topic within the context of at least two of the three revolutions covered by this course. For instance, if you wanted to research the role of the women in political mobilization, you might compare the experience of the Daughters of Liberty in the American Revolution with that of the Society of Revolutionary and Republican Women in the French Revolution. It is my job to guide you through the process of choosing a topic, researching it, and writing a persuasive interpretation. But you should begin thinking about potential research topics early in the semester.

After you submit your rough draft, I will give you detailed comments for revision. I expect you to take these suggestions seriously as you revise your paper into its final form.

5. Final Paper and Presentation —**30%**

Final Paper Due: May 1 via email

Towards the end of the semester each student will make a ten-minute presentation of his/her findings to the class. You will not only introduce your topic, you will also explain your research process, your source base, and your argument. I highly encourage you to use PowerPoint.

Your final, well-polished paper is due by 5pm on May 1. You must email it to me.

All writing assignments must be typed and double-spaced, in 12-point font with 1-inch margins. Citations must conform to the Chicago Manual of Style.

V. Course Readings

We will be reading a combination historical scholarship as well as works on historical methodology and writing. Articles and selections from books will be listed under the heading for each class meeting. Articles are available on blackboard.

Required Texts:

- Gordon Wood, *The American Revolution: A History* (New York: Modern Library, 2002)
- William Doyle, *The French Revolution: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000)
- Jeremy D. Popkin, *A Concise History of the Haitian Revolution* (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011)
- Mary Lynn Rampolla, *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History*, 9th Edition (Boston, MA: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2017)

VI: Classroom Policies:

My policies are simple:

Show up to every class on time having done the reading.

Do the assignments.

Be respectful.

Use common sense.

Do your own work. Do Not Plagiarize

Do not cheat.

If you have a question, ask me in person or via Email.

Late papers will be penalized **one-third grade per day** [example: an A paper that is one day late becomes an A- paper]

For a more detailed explanation of the above, see the University Policies:

“Purdue prohibits “dishonesty in connection with any University activity. Cheating, plagiarism, or knowingly furnishing false information to the University are examples of dishonesty.” [Part 5, Section III-B-2-a, Student Regulations] Furthermore, the University Senate has stipulated that “the commitment of acts of cheating, lying, and deceit in any of their diverse forms (such as the use of substitutes for taking examinations, the use of illegal cribs, plagiarism, and copying during examinations) is dishonest and must not be tolerated. Moreover, knowingly to aid and abet, directly or indirectly, other parties in committing dishonest acts is in itself dishonest.” [University Senate Document 72-18, December 15, 1972]”

<https://www.purdue.edu/odos/academic-integrity/>

Students with Disabilities:

Students who need special accommodations to participate fully in class should contact me as soon as possible. While I will do everything in my power to accommodate your needs, Purdue University requires you to provide me with appropriate written documentation and to have that documentation on file with Student Services. Students should be aware that Services for Student Disabilities are available at 494-1247 if you need further assistance.

VII. Course Content:

WEEK 1

Mon., Jan. 13: What is the Age of Revolutions?

Wed., Jan. 15: What is Thinking Historically?

Fri., Jan. 17: Comparative History: Revolutionary Scripts?

Reading:

Keith Michael Baker and Dan Edelstein, eds., *Scripting Revolution: A Historical Approach to the Comparative Study of Revolutions* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2015), introduction. [Blackboard]

Thomas Andrews and Flannery Burke, “What Does It Mean to Think Historically?” *Perspectives*, (January 1, 2007), [website]

WEEK 2

Mon., Jan. 20: American Revolution: Causes?

Wed., Jan. 22: American Revolution: Conduct?

Fri., Jan. 24: American Revolution: Consequences?

Reading:

Gordon Wood, *The American Revolution: A History* (New York: Modern Library, 2002)

WEEK 3

Mon., Jan. 27: MLK: No Class

Wed., Jan. 29: French Revolution: Causes?

Fri., Jan. 31: French Revolution: Conduct?

Reading:

William Doyle, *The French Revolution: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000)

WEEK 4

Mon., Feb. 3: The French Revolution: Consequences?

Wed., Feb. 5: The Haitian Revolution: Causes?

Fri., Feb. 7: The Haitian Revolution: Conduct?

Reading:

Jeremy D. Popkin, *A Concise History of the Haitian Revolution* (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011)

WEEK 5

Mon., Feb. 10: The Haitian Revolution: Consequences?

Wed., Feb. 12: Topics, Questions, Problems?

Fri., Feb. 14: Historiography?

Reading:

Mary Lynn Rampolla, *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History*, 9th Edition (Boston, MA: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2017), first half.

WEEK 6

Mon., Feb. 17: Sources: Primary vs. Secondary?

Wed., Feb. 19: Citations?

Fri., Feb. 21: Research: Libraries, Databases, and Archives: Prof. Chapman

Reading:

Mary Lynn Rampolla, *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History*, 9th Edition (Boston, MA: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2017), second half.

WEEK 7

Mon., Feb. 24: Formulating a Thesis?

Wed., Feb. 26: Making an Outline?

Fri., Feb. 28: Research: no class. Topic Proposal **Due by 5pm via email**

WEEK 8

Mon., Mar. 2: Research: no class

Wed., Mar. 4: Research: no class

Fri., Mar. 6: Research: no class

WEEK 9

Mon., Mar. 9: Primary Source Presentations

Wed., Mar. 11: Primary Source Presentations

Fri., Mar. 13: Primary Source Presentations

WEEK 10

Mon., Mar. 16: SPRING BREAK: no class
Wed., Mar. 18: SPRING BREAK: no class
Fri., Mar. 20: SPRING BREAK: no class

WEEK 11

Mon., Mar. 23: Research and Writing: no class
Wed., Mar. 25: Research and Writing: no class
Fri., Mar. 27: Research and Writing: no class

WEEK 12

Mon., Mar. 30: Individual Meetings by appointment
Wed., Apr. 1: Individual Meetings by appointment
Fri., Apr. 3: Individual Meetings by appointment

WEEK 13

Mon., Apr. 6: Writing: no class
Wed., Apr. 8: Writing: no class
Fri., Apr. 10: Writing: no class. Rough Draft **Due by 5pm via email**

WEEK 14

Mon., Apr. 13: Editing and Individual Meetings if needed
Wed., Apr. 15: Editing and Individual Meetings if needed
Fri., Apr. 17: Editing and Individual Meetings if needed

WEEK 15

Mon., Apr. 20: Presentations
Wed., Apr. 22: Presentations
Fri., Apr. 24: Presentations

WEEK 16

Mon., Apr. 27: Editing
Wed., Apr. 29: Editing
Fri., May. 1: FINAL PAPER **due by 5pm via email**

Disclaimer:

In the event of a major campus emergency, course requirements, deadlines and grading percentages are subject to changes that may be necessitated by a revised semester calendar or other circumstances beyond the instructor's control. Relevant changes to this course will be posted on Blackboard or can be obtained by contacting the instructor via email. You are expected to read your @purdue.edu email on a frequent basis.