

HIST 41505—Gender and Politics in Early Modern Europe
T-TH 12:00-1:15 p.m.
BRNG 1242

Professor

Silvia Z. Mitchell

Email: mitch131@purdue.edu

Virtual office hours, by appointment

<https://purdue-edu.zoom.us/j/4382740154?pwd=ZkU0UXI0cHhMSIVHOEtQTkFzT2NtUT09>

Meeting ID: 438 274 0154

Passcode: 977590

OFFICE HOURS

by appointment: mitch131@purdue.edu

RATIONALE

This course explores the multiple ways in which gender and politics intersected in the various political systems that prevailed in early modern Europe, from the fifteenth to the eighteenth centuries. Through the lens of gender and politics, therefore, the course provides a foundation to understand the nature of the various European states and their evolution through early modernity. We will examine the configuration of the Italian princely courts, Renaissance republics, as well as the Spanish and French monarchies to understand how early modern political systems understood, questioned, and constructed political power along gender lines. The course is organized around in three parts: 1. gender and politics in republics and principalities, 2. sexual politics and rulership, and 3. gender and dynastic politics. Students will pursue a research project of a topic of their choice in consultation with me and these will be shared with the rest of the class. The main purpose of the course is to demonstrate the extent to which gender was essential in the political history of Europe in early modernity.

COURSE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course, students will be able to 1) identify the main political systems in early modern Europe; 2) discern how men, women, and gender discourse shaped these political regimes, and 3) recognize the mechanisms and power structures that included or excluded early modern women and men in the political process.

Students will sharpen their analytical, writing, and presentation skills as they work on a major individual project and share their findings during a conference-style presentation at the end of the course.

REQUIRED BOOKS (read my notes highlighted yellow)

Alison Cole, *Italian Renaissance Courts: Art, Pleasure and Power* (Laurence King Publishing)
ISBN 978-1780677408

(there is another edition of this book published under a different title, *The art of the Italian Renaissance court* (I don't care which edition; it is the same book).

Tracy Adams and Christine Adams, *The Creation of the French Royal Mistress: From Agnès Sorel to Madame du Barry* (Penn State University Press, 2020) ISBN: 978-0-271-08598-2

<https://www.psypress.org/books/titles/978-0-271-08597-5.html>

Silvia Z. Mitchell, *Queen, Mother, and Stateswoman: Mariana of Austria and the Government of Spain* (Penn State University Press, 2019) ISBN: 978-0-271-08338-4

<https://www.psypress.org/books/titles/978-0-271-08339-1.html>

John Merriman, *A History of Modern Europe: From the Renaissance to the Present* (I uploaded a PDF to Brightspace)

Recommended:

Rampolla, Mary Lynn, *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History*, 7th ed.

Additional readings will be posted in the syllabus and accessible at the library, so you do need to buy additional books. On occasion, I may upload them to Brightspace. Please, pay attention and ask if in doubt.

Assignments and Evaluation:

- 1. A Major Research Paper, 15 Pages. 35 points.** Graded on creativity of the topic, how well it connects to course themes, appropriateness and depth of research, and clarity of writing and ideas.
- 2. Research Paper Draft, 10 points.** 10-page draft must be as close as possible to the finished product, so that I can give you feedback on the writing, research, and organization.
- 3. Research Paper Proposal and Annotated Bibliography, 5 points.** The proposal will be shared in class and should include a tentative description of the topic, research questions, research plan, and an identification of sources.
- 4. Formal Responses to Readings in a Discussion Forum (RDF) (50 points total).**

All assignments will be uploaded to Brightspace.

Grade Distribution and Due Dates:

Assignment	Points	Due Dates
RDF	50 (5 @ 10 points each)	January 29, February 12, March 5, March 12, March 26
Proposal and Annotated Bibliography	5	April 2
Draft paper	10	April 23
Final Paper	35	May 4
Total	100	

Grading Scale

100-99 = A+ 98-95 = A 94-91 = A- 90-88 = B+ 87-83 = B 82-80 = B-

79-78 = C+ 77-73 = C 72-70 = C- 69-68 = D+ 67-63 = D 62-60 = D-

Expectations and Policies

Class time will be devoted to mastery of the material and the topic. All learning activities (including occasional lectures) require active and substantial student involvement. It is crucial that students keep up with the readings and come to class. Students will occasionally lead discussions. In such cases, arrangements will be made in advance.

Attendance will be taken every class; excused absences will be considered in line with Purdue University Regulations

<https://catalog.purdue.edu/content.php?catoid=15&navoid=18634#a-attendance>; it is critically given our current situation with the pandemic that you don't miss class for reasons other than health or emergencies. Do keep me informed—to the best of your ability. Be mindful that this course has a strong participation requirement and that even if you have excused absences, it may be difficult to complete the course work. If you are sick with COVID, follow the procedures set by Protect Purdue and the CDC.

Late work and extensions will be granted when circumstances outside your control prevented you from submitting an assignment. You should talk to me if that is the case, hopefully in advance (although I understand that is not always possible). Late work without any sort of communication will be penalized or, in some cases, will not be accepted. If you miss a major assignment due to illness or an emergency, it is your responsibility to contact me and make alternative plans to complete the work.

CLASS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND LAST-MINUTE COMMUNICATIONS (IN CASE OF EMERGENCIES) WILL BE DONE THROUGH BRIGHSPACE.

Please, make sure you check the course website or allow notifications sent to you. This is the medium I will use to communicate with the class should some unforeseen circumstance comes up.

Diversity & Inclusion

Purdue University is committed to maintaining a community which recognizes and values the inherent worth and dignity of every person; fosters tolerance, sensitivity, understanding, and mutual respect among its members; and encourages each individual to strive to reach his or her own potential. In pursuit of its goal of academic excellence, the University seeks to develop and nurture diversity. The University believes that diversity among its many members strengthens the institution, stimulates creativity, promotes the exchange of ideas, and enriches campus life. Purdue's nondiscrimination policy can be found at: http://www.purdue.edu/purdue/ea_eou_statement.html.

Academic Integrity

Plagiarism or any sort of cheating will result in a failing grade for the entire course and, more than likely, the case will be referred to the Dean of Students Office. Cheating can take many forms, including, but not limited to, passing someone else's work for one's own, copying from

another student's work, or using unauthorized material. Familiarize yourself with Purdue's policy on Academic Integrity. <http://www.purdue.edu/odos/osrr/academicintegritybrochure.php>

Disclaimer:

In the event of a major campus emergency, the above requirements, deadlines and grading policies are subject to changes that may be required by a revised semester calendar.

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

Week 1—January 13-15: Introductions and expectations

Reading Assignment: Cole, Introduction, chapter 1, chapters 2

Part 1: Gender and Politics in the Italian Renaissance

Week 2—January 20-22: The Courts of Naples and Urbino

Reading Assignment: Cole, and 3 and 4

Theresa Earenflight, Chapter 1: "Alter Nos: The Lieutenancy of Maria of Castile" from her book, *The King's Other Body: Maria of Castile and the Crown of Aragon* (Purdue Library, eBook).

Week 3—January 27-29: The Courts of Ferrara and Mantua

Reading Assignments: Cole, chapters 5 and 6

Deanna Shemek, "Introduction: Isabella D'Este" from her book, *Selected Letters by Isabella D'Este* (Purdue Library, eBook).

RDF1. Due January 29 by 11:59 p.m.

Week 4—February 3-5: Milan and the Italian Wars

Reading Assignments: Cole, chapter 7 and Epilogue

Merriman, Chapter 2: The Renaissance (only to page 56).

Part 2: New Gendered Perspectives on Politics, Diplomacy, and International Politics

Week 5—February 10-12: Royal marriages, inheritance laws, and dynastic strategy in the creation of monarchical states and international politics.

Reading assignment: Mitchell, *Queen, Mother, and Stateswoman*: Introduction, chapter 1.

RDF2. Due February 12 by 11:59 p.m.

Week 6—February 17-19: Gendering Political Offices

Reading Assignments: Mitchell, *Queen, Mother, and Stateswoman*, Chapter 2

Carole Levine, "Introduction" and "Elizabeth as King and Queen," from her *The Heart and the Stomach of a King: Elizabeth I and the Politics of Sex and Gender* (Purdue Library).

Week 7—February 24-26: Women, Gender, and Diplomacy

Reading assignment: from Glenda Sluga and Carolyn James, eds. *Women, Diplomacy and International Politics Since 1500*, read: "Introduction: The Long International History of Women and Diplomacy," C. James, "Women and Diplomacy in Renaissance Italy," and Mitchell,

“Marriage Plots: Royal women, marriage diplomacy and international politics at the Spanish, French, and Imperial Courts.” (Purdue Library, ebook)

Week 8—March 3-5: Special Presentations by Caroline R. James, Doctoral Candidate, Purdue University Department of History

Readings assignment: TBA

RDF3. Due March 5 by 11:59 p.m.

Week 9—March 10-12: Gender and Geopolitical Considerations

October 13:

Reading assignment: Mitchell, *Queen, Mother, and Stateswoman*, Chapters 3 to 5

RDF4. Due March 12 by 11:59 p.m.

Week 10—March 17-19: SPRING BREAK

Week 11—March 24-26: Political Motherhood versus Political Childhood.

Reading assignment: Mitchell, *Queen, Mother, and Stateswoman*, Chapter 6, 7, and conclusion.

Mitchell, “Growing up Carlos II” (on Brightspace)

RDF5. Due March 26 by 11:59 p.m.

Part 3: sexual politics and rulership

Week 12—March 31-April 2: The Royal Mistress

Reading assignment: Adams & Adams, *The French Royal Mistress*, Introduction, Chapter 1

Research Proposal and Annotated Bibliography Due by April 2, 11:59 p.m.

Week 13—April 7-9: The evolution of the French mistress, vis-à-vis male favorites, and queens in the 16th century

Reading assignment: Adams & Adams, *The French Royal Mistress*, Chapters 2, 3, and 4

Week 14—April 14-16: The 18th centuries. The institution of the mistress and the Marie Antoinette “problem.”

Reading assignment: Adams & Adams, *The French Royal Mistress*, Chapters 5, 6 and epilogue

Week 15—April 21-23—presentations

DRAFT of Research Paper, due April 23 by 11:59 p.m.

Week 16—April 28-30—presentations

FINAL PAPER DUE MAY 4 by 11:59 p.m.