Enlightenment and Revolution in the Atlantic World

HIS 350L (39515) & EUS 346 (36420)
Spring Semester 2013

Garrison 1.126
Thursday, 6:00 – 9:00 PM

Instructor
James M. Vaughn
jmvaughn@austin.utexas.edu
Garrison 3.218
Phone: (512) 232-8268
Office Hours: Wednesday, 2:00 – 4:00 PM and by appointment

Course Description
What is the relationship between the efforts of men and women to understand the world and their attempts to change it? This upper-level undergraduate seminar grapples with this question by exploring the intellectual and political history of Western Europe and its Atlantic colonies during the seventeenth, eighteenth, and early nineteenth centuries. The seminar’s readings and discussions focus on the interrelationship of the Enlightenment and the political revolutions of the same period – particularly the English Revolution of the mid seventeenth century (c. 1640-1660), the Glorious Revolution of 1688-1689, the American Revolution of 1775-1783, and the French Revolution of 1789-1815.

During these centuries, men and women living in the North Atlantic region began to think about and act in the world in unprecedented and dramatically disruptive ways. The Enlightenment’s investigation of the conditions of possibility for knowledge (How do we know what we know?) and its quest for greater human self-awareness and intellectual self-determination radically transformed the nature of philosophical, scientific, and cultural inquiry. The
political reform movements and revolutions of the period aimed to increase freedom in society at an individual and collective level. In doing so, they undermined and ultimately overthrew existing social and political orders. Together, “Enlightenment and Revolution” transformed the institutions and practices of the Ancien Régime and fundamentally broke with millennia-long patterns of agrarian civilization.

What was the relationship between these efforts to understand and to change the world? How did these efforts usher in the epoch of modernity in which we live, with its ceaseless change and its never-ending struggles for greater knowledge and freedom? This seminar wrestles with these questions by reading and discussing major writers in their historical context, including Locke, Voltaire, Diderot, Rousseau, Smith, Kant, Paine, Constant, and Hegel.

**Writing Flag**
This course carries the Writing Flag. Writing Flag courses are designed to give students experience with writing in an academic discipline. In this class, you can expect to write regularly during the semester, complete substantial writing projects, and receive feedback from your instructor to help you improve your writing. You will also have the opportunity to revise one or more assignments, and you may be asked to read and discuss your peers’ work. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from your written work. Writing Flag classes meet the Core Communications objectives of Critical Thinking, Communication, Teamwork, and Personal Responsibility, established by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

**Assignments and Assessment**

**Attendance and Participation (15%)**: This is a seminar and informed participation is a central requirement of the course. The instructor will deliver short lectures from time to time but the main focus of each class will be guided discussions of the assigned texts. The quality of these discussions is ultimately dependent on consistent and considered student participation. As such, students are expected to do all of the required readings, to participate regularly, and to attend every class. Each student is allowed one unexcused absence. The attendance and participation grade will be decreased by one third of a letter for each additional unexcused absence (e.g., A- to B+, B+ to B, etc.). In order to have an absence excused, students must provide documentation (e.g., a doctor’s note) to the instructor.

**Reader Comments (15%)**: Students are responsible for commenting on each week’s reading assignment. This commentary should be no more than one or two paragraphs and it can address one or more of the texts assigned for the week. The comments may speak to any aspect of the reading. What do you think of the reading? Do you have any questions or do you find any passages
difficult to understand? What if anything did you learn from the text? Why do you think the text was written? To whom was the author speaking and why? What does the text tell us about the period in which it was written? These comments must be posted weekly on Blackboard (in the relevant “Discussion Board” section) no later than 9:00 PM on Wednesday. Students should look over the weekly comments posted on Blackboard.

**Reading Review Paper (30%)**: Students are required to write a paper of three to five double-spaced pages in length on one of the course’s major readings. The purpose of this paper is to describe and analyze the major claims advanced in a selected text in light of the seminar’s discussions and the other readings. This paper must be edited for grammar and style and written in 12 pt. Times New Roman font. The reading review paper is due at the beginning of class on **Thursday, March 7**. Students should visit the Undergraduate Writing Center in order to discuss their papers at least a few days before the deadline. Students are welcome to re-write the reading review paper within one week of receiving it back from the instructor.

**Term Paper (40%)**: Students are required to write a term paper of eight to twelve double-spaced pages in length on a topic determined in consultation with the instructor. The topic of the term paper should be determined by the eleventh week of the course. The paper must examine a major issue discussed in the seminar and address several of the course’s readings. For the term paper, students may discuss and analyze additional readings not covered by the syllabus as long as these readings are determined in consultation with the instructor. The term paper must be edited for grammar and style and written in 12 pt. Times New Roman font. Term papers are due at the instructor’s office (Garrison 3.218) by 5:00 PM on **Friday, May 10**. Students should visit the Undergraduate Writing Center in order to discuss their papers at least a few days before the deadline.

Please note that plus/minus grades (e.g., A-, B+, C-, etc.) will be assigned for the final grade in this course.

**The Undergraduate Writing Center**

Please consider visiting the Undergraduate Writing Center (FAC 211; 512-471-6222; http://uwc.utexas.edu/home) in order to discuss your reading review paper and term paper with a member of its staff. The following paragraph contains a description of the services provided by the UWC.

The Undergraduate Writing Center offers free, individualized, expert help with writing for any UT undergraduate, by appointment or on a drop-in basis. Any undergraduate enrolled in a course at UT can visit the UWC for assistance with any writing project. They work with students from every department on
campus, for both academic and non-academic writing. Whether you are writing a lab report, a resume, a term paper, a statement for an application, or your own poetry, UWC consultants will be happy to work with you. Their services are not just for writing with “problems.” Getting feedback from an informed audience is a normal part of a successful writing project. Consultants help students develop strategies to improve their writing. The assistance they provide is intended to foster independence. Each student determines how to use the consultant's advice. The consultants are trained to help you work on your writing in ways that preserve the integrity of your work.

**Academic Conduct**

Students are required to uphold the standards of academic integrity set by the University of Texas atAustin. The standards and regulations for academic integrity are available online at:

http://www.utexas.edu/cola/depts/history/about/academic-integrity.php

All work must be your own and all cases of plagiarism will automatically result in a failing grade for the course as a whole. There will be no deadline extensions or incomplete grades unless the instructor is presented with a legitimate and documented excuse in advance of the relevant due date.

**Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities (512-471-6259). If you require additional assistance, please inform the instructor so that proper arrangements can be made.

**Required Texts (available for purchase at the University Co-op)**

Schedule of Seminar Sessions and Readings
In addition to the required texts, there are assigned readings available as Adobe PDFs or via website links on Blackboard under “Course Documents.” The readings available on Blackboard are marked with the label “[Blackboard].”

Week 1 – Thursday, January 17
Introduction
No readings.

Week 2 – Thursday, January 24
From the “birth of civilization” to the “rupture of modernity,” c. 8000 BCE-1850 CE
1. Cynthia Stokes Brown, Big History: From the Big Bang to the Present, pp. 75-126 and 168-219 [Blackboard].

Week 3 – Thursday, January 31
England’s revolutionary transformation (c. 1640-1700) and the crisis of the seventeenth century, Part 1
1. Watch The British Wars, episode 8 of A History of Britain, BBC documentary series written and presented by Simon Schama (approx. 60 minutes) [Blackboard].
2. Watch Revolutions, episode 9 of A History of Britain, BBC documentary series written and presented by Simon Schama (approx. 59 minutes) [Blackboard].

Week 4 – Thursday, February 7
England’s revolutionary transformation (c. 1640-1700) and the crisis of the seventeenth century, Part 2

Week 5 – Thursday, February 14
The Enlightenment and the republic of letters, c. 1690-1760
1. Margaret C. Jacob, ed., The Enlightenment: A Brief History with Documents, pp. 1-55, 73-93, and 114-159.
Week 6 – Thursday, February 21
The Rousseauian revolution, c. 1750-1770
3. Voltaire, “Letter to Rousseau” (August 30, 1755) [Blackboard].

Week 7 – Thursday, February 28
Rousseau and the radicalization of the Enlightenment, c. 1760-1800
1. Margaret C. Jacob, ed., The Enlightenment: A Brief History with Documents, pp. 177-201 and 59-65 (please do these readings in the order listed).
2. Immanuel Kant, “Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Intent” (1784) [Blackboard].

The reading review paper is due at the beginning of class on Thursday, March 7.

Week 8 – Thursday, March 7
The later Enlightenment and the modern project of freedom, c. 1760-1800,
Part 1
1. Immanuel Kant, “Speculative Beginning of Human History” (1786) [Blackboard].
4. Watch The Magic Flute (Die Zauberflöte, 1791), an opera composed by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart with a libretto by Emanuel Schikaneder (approx. 165 minutes) [Blackboard].

SPRING BREAK

Week 9 – Thursday, March 21
The later Enlightenment and the modern project of freedom, c. 1760-1800,
Part 2
1. Adam Smith, “Letter to the Authors of the Edinburgh Review” (1756) [Blackboard].
2. Adam Smith, An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations (1776) [Blackboard]. Please read the following selections:
   Volume I
   * Introduction and Plan of the Work
   * Book I: Of the Causes of Improvement …
     1.1. Of the Division of Labour
     1.2. Of the Principle which gives Occasion to the Division of Labour
I.3. That the Division of Labour is Limited by the Extent of the Market
I.4. Of the Origin and Use of Money
I.6. Of the Component Parts of the Price of Commodities
I.7. Of the Natural and Market Price of Commodities
I.8. Of the Wages of Labour
I.9. Of the Profits of Stock

* Book III: Of the different Progress of Opulence in different Nations
   III.1. Of the Natural Progress of Opulence
   III.2. Of the Discouragement of Agriculture in the Ancient State of Europe after the Fall of the Roman Empire
   III.3. Of the Rise and Progress of Cities and Towns, after the Fall of the Roman Empire
   III.4. How the Commerce of the Towns Contributed to the Improvement of the Country

Volume II
   * Book IV: Of Systems of political Economy
     IV.7. Of Colonies
   * Book V: Of the Revenue of the Sovereign or Commonwealth
     V.1. Of the Expences of the Sovereign or Commonwealth

Week 10 – Thursday, March 28
The global crisis of the British Empire and the origins of the American Revolution, c. 1750-1776
1. Watch The Wrong Empire, episode 11 of A History of Britain, BBC documentary series written and presented by Simon Schama (approx. 59 minutes).
4. Benjamin Franklin, “Letter to Lord Kames” (February 25, 1767) [Blackboard].
5. Thomas Paine, Common Sense (1776) [Blackboard].
7. “The Declaration of Independence” (1776) [Blackboard].

Week 11 – Thursday, April 4
1776, 1788, and the Atlantic Age of Revolution, c. 1775-1800
**Week 12 – Thursday, April 11**  
The era of the Great French Revolution of 1789, Part 1: the anti-slavery movement and the revolt of the Third Estate, c. 1770-1789

3. Watch *Jefferson in Paris*, a film directed by James Ivory and written by Ruth Prawer Jhabvala (approx. 139 minutes) [Blackboard].

**Week 13 – Thursday, April 18**  
The era of the Great French Revolution of 1789, Part 2: the political constitution of universal humanity, c. 1789-1815

2. Excerpts from Thomas Paine, *The Rights of Man* (1791) [Blackboard].
4. Immanuel Kant, “To Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch” (1795) [Blackboard].

**Week 14 – Thursday, April 25**  
What was restored at the Restoration?: The revolutionary aftermath and cosmopolitan civil society, c. 1815-1848

2. Benjamin Constant, “The Liberty of the Ancients Compared with that of the Moderns” (1819) [Blackboard].

**Week 15 – Thursday, May 2**  
World history and the modern project of freedom, c. 1815-1848


The term paper is due at the instructor’s office (GAR 3.218) by 5:00 PM on Friday, May 10.