Europe and the Making of Modernity

Fall Semester 2017
Department & Course: HIS 383
Unique Number: 39755

Garrison 2.124
Wednesday, 6:00 – 9:00 PM

Instructor
James M. Vaughn
jmvaughn@austin.utexas.edu
Garrison 3.218
Office Phone: (512) 232-8268
Office Hours: Wednesday, 3:00 – 5:00 PM, and by appointment

Course Description
This graduate seminar examines the emergence and development of modernity in Europe and the wider world from the seventeenth century to the present. Over the past few centuries, a revolution in the life of humanity has taken place as profound and far-reaching as the rise of settled agriculture over ten thousand years ago. The course examines several aspects of this world-historical transformation as they developed in European societies and empires, including the rise and evolution of capitalism, industrialization, urbanization, secularization, democratization, and the emergence of new forms of subjectivity.

The purpose of the seminar is reading and discussing relevant major works of historiography, social science, and social theory. The weekly discussions focus on the conceptual frameworks employed in historical interpretations as much as on empirical research and narrative strategies, and special attention is paid to the adequacy of the concepts and categories used by historians and social scientists to grasp the nature and dynamics of modern society.

Assignments and Assessment
Attendance and Participation (50%): This is a graduate seminar consisting of class discussions held once a week. As such, you are expected to do the assigned readings, to attend every seminar, and to fully participate in the discussions. You are also required to provide an introduction/framework for two class discussions. As part of introducing/framing the week’s assigned readings, you must prepare an overview of them (1-2 single-spaced pages) as well as a list of questions for class discussion. The overviews and the lists of questions must be posted in the Discussions section of the course’s Canvas site by midnight on Tuesday before class. You are required to read each week’s overviews and lists of questions before class on Wednesday.

Course Paper (50%): You are required to write an interpretive essay of twenty-five to thirty pages in length on a topic determined in consultation with the instructor. Your essay should
explore a topic relevant to both your own research interests and the broad themes of the seminar. Your paper topic must be determined in consultation with the instructor by October 11. You can discuss and determine your topic with the instructor via e-mail, visits to office hours, or individual appointments. You must submit short progress reports on your paper by October 25 and November 15. The full rough draft of your paper is due by 5:00 PM on December 1. You will discuss your rough draft with the instructor in an individual meeting. The final draft of your paper is due by 5:00 PM on December 8.

**Reading Assignments**
The assigned books for this course are widely available for purchase online in new and used copies. The assigned articles and chapters are available as downloadable PDFs or via website links in the Modules section of the course’s Canvas site.

**Schedule of Readings**

**August 30**

Introduction
No readings.

**September 6**

The origins and development of capitalism – Session 1

**September 13**

The origins and development of capitalism – Session 2

**September 20**

The transformation of religion – Session 1

**September 27**

The transformation of religion – Session 2
October 4
The rise and transformation of the public sphere
Jürgen Habermas, The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society, trans. Thomas Burger with the assistance of Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge, MA, 1991).

THE PAPER TOPIC MUST BE DETERMINED NO LATER THAN OCTOBER 11.

October 11
The Enlightenment in theory and practice – Session 1

October 18
The Enlightenment in theory and practice – Session 2

THE FIRST PROGRESS REPORT MUST BE E-MAILED TO THE INSTRUCTOR NO LATER THAN OCTOBER 25.

October 25
The Industrial Revolution

November 1
Industrialization and proletarianization

November 8
Urbanization and class struggle
David Harvey, Paris, Capital of Modernity (New York, 2006).

THE SECOND PROGRESS REPORT MUST BE E-MAILED TO THE INSTRUCTOR NO LATER THAN NOVEMBER 15.
November 15
The transformation of gender and sexuality

November 22
THANKSGIVING BREAK

November 29
Modern society in the twentieth century

THE FULL ROUGH DRAFT OF YOUR COURSE PAPER MUST BE E-MAILED TO THE INSTRUCTOR BY 5:00 PM ON DECEMBER 1.

December 6
Postmodernity?: the history of the present

THE FINAL DRAFT OF YOUR COURSE PAPER MUST BE TURNED IN AT THE DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY’S MAIN OFFICE (GARRISON 1.104) BY 5:00 PM ON DECEMBER 8.