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HIST 213, Renaissance and Reformation Europe

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SYLLABUS

History 213: Renaissance and Reformation Europe
Rhodes College, Fall Semester 2007
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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course will survey the history of Europe from the 15th through the 17th century. While recognizing the various continuities of this period, the course will focus on the major changes that occurred in European society and culture over these three centuries, an era which is sometimes seen as one of transition from the medieval to the modern world. Among the changes that will be examined are the impact of new technologies; the expansion of Europe and the “discovery” of the “New World”; the intellectual developments of the Renaissance; the Protestant Reformation and the Catholic Counter-Reformation; the “revolution” in science; and the development of the nation state, in both “absolutist” and “constitutionalist” guises.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- To introduce students to the basic contours of early modern European history
- To critically engage the ideas, forces, and values which shaped early modern Europe and continue to influence our world today
- To provide students with greater awareness of historical process, particularly change over time, including the causes and effects (unintended as well as intended) of change.
- To help students better analyze primary historical documents
- To help students improve their communication skills, both written and oral

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

- Students will be expected to attend class regularly. Having more than three unexcused absences may negatively affect one's grade.
- Students will be expected to participate in class discussions.
- Students will be expected to do the assigned reading, which will amount to approximately 100 pages per week, though this will vary somewhat depending upon the nature of the reading.
- Students will write three out of class papers of approximately 3 to 6 pages each, double spaced. All papers must be turned in the day they are due as specified in the course calendar. Late papers will automatically be given a lower grade. The three papers will be: 1.) an analysis of Martin Luther's 95 Theses; 2.) a comparison of William Shakespeare's play Hamlet and Jean Racine's play Phaedra; and 3.) a paper on Merry Wiesner's book Women and Gender in Early

Modern Europe. Additional information on each of these assignments will be provided in class. Students will take an in class essay exam on Brian Fagan's book, The Little Ice Age. Students will take in class a mid-semester and a final exam. Both exams will be entirely essay in nature.

GRADING:

A student's final grade will be determined according to the following formula.

Out of Class Assignments:	30% (10% each)
Class Discussion	15%
Exam on <u>The Little Ice Age</u>	10%
Midterm Exam	20%
Final Exam	25%

HONOR CODE:

Students should be familiar with the Rhodes Honor Code. In this connection, it may be useful to note that none of the three out of class assignments are research assignments. None require the use of any other books or articles than the reading assigned for the paper. However, if a student does use an additional source or sources in writing one of these papers, he or she must cite that in the paper. Any quotations from any source must be indicated by a citation and the appropriate use of quotation marks.

REQUIRED BOOKS:

- Euan Cameron, ed., Early Modern Europe
- Brian Fagan, The Little Ice Age
- Barbara Diefendorf, Beneath the Cross
- Merry Wiesner, Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe
- William Shakespeare, Hamlet
- Jean Racine, Phaedra

In addition, students will be given assigned readings from the Internet and, perhaps on occasion, from a handout. Internet assignments for the first couple of weeks of the course are indicated on the course calendar. Such assignments for later in the course will be given in class.

COURSE CALENDAR:

A course calendar is attached. The actual time devoted to each topic may vary a little, depending on class discussion and student interest. However, the calendar accurately indicates the topics that will be examined and the order in which they will be explored.

Course Calendar

- Aug. 23 Introduction to Course; Europe on the Eve of the Renaissance
Aug. 28 Life in Medieval Europe (Cameron, 31-47; Fagan, 3-44)
Aug. 30 New Technologies (Cameron, 64-7, 110-120; Fagan, 47-78)
Sept. 4 The Plague and its Social and Economic Consequences (Fagan, 79-97; Boccaccio excerpt, <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/boccacio2.html>)
Sept. 6 The Plague and its Cultural and Religious Effects (Fagan, 101-47; The cremation of Strasbourg Jews, <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/jewish/1348-jewsblackdeath.html>)
Sept. 11 The Church and Religious Practice in the 15th century (Fagan, 149-66; Diefendorf, 28-48; Council of Constance, www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/constance1.html <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/constance3.html>)
Pius II, "Exacrabilis", <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/p2-execrabilis.html>
Sept. 13 Climate and History (**IN CLASS EXAM ON THE LITTLE ICE AGE**)
Sept. 18 European Expansion and the Discovery of the New World (Excerpts from Columbus' Journal, <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/columbus1.html>)
Sept. 20 The Renaissance: Civic Humanism (Cameron, 67-75; Vergerio, "The New Education", <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/vergerius.html>)
Sept. 25 The High Renaissance (Pico della Mirandola, "Oration on the Dignity of Man", <http://www.cscs.umich.edu/~crshalizi/Mirandola/>)
Sept. 27 The Northern Renaissance and the Prelude to Reformation (Cameron, 81-110)
Oct. 2 Luther and the Break with Rome (**PAPER ON 95 THESES DUE**)
Oct. 4 The Lutheran Reformation and the Religious Division of Europe (Diefendorf, 3-28)
Oct. 9 **MIDTERM EXAM**
Oct. 11 The Protestant Reformation Spreads (Diefendorf, 49-75)
Oct. 18 The Calvinist Reformation: Geneva and Beyond (Diefendorf, 107-144)
Oct. 23 The Catholic Reformation (Diefendorf, 76-106)
Oct. 25 The Wars of Religion (Diefendorf, 145-180; Cameron, 120-133)
Oct. 30 The Copernican Revolution and the Crisis in Science (Cameron, 75-8; Wiesner, Chapters 1-2)
Nov. 1 Inflation and the Increase in Poverty (Cameron, 47-62; Wiesner, Chaps. 3-5)
Nov. 6 The Crisis of the Late 16th/Early 17th Century (Wiesner, Chaps. 6-8)
Nov. 8 Women and the Family in Early Modern Europe (**PAPER ON WIESNER BOOK DUE**)
Nov. 13 Seventeenth Century Rebellions (Cameron, 209-19; Begin Hamlet)
Nov. 15 Search for Resolution to the Crisis: the Arts and Political Theory (Cameron, 171-205; Finish Hamlet)
Nov. 20 Economic Recovery and Expansion (Cameron, 137-170, 233-264)
Nov. 27 Absolutism and Constitutionalism (Cameron, 219-230; Begin Phaedra)
Dec. 4 Early Modern Europe in Retrospect (Finish Phaedra) **PAPER COMPARING HAMLET AND PHAEDRA DUE**