Description. This course proposes a historical exploration of French culture and literature from the Religious Wars to the Revolution of 1789 and beyond. We will focus on the growth of an intellectual and artistic culture in the context of the profound political and social changes that defined the emergence of France as a modern nation in this period. We’ll emphasize the centralization of the State and the evolutions of the hierarchical Old Regime social structure, exploring the opportunities and constraints that these parallel developments presented to writers, whose works and careers can be studied as products of and reactions to the new political and social realities of the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries.

Course Goals. 1) to understand key political and social changes of France from the 16th to the late 18th centuries; 2) to understand, against the backdrop of this history, the development of intellectual culture in its major articulations from Humanism through Classicism and the Enlightenment; 3) to reflect more broadly upon the notion of culture and its relation to events and to media; 4) to develop analytical, reasoning, and writing skills.

Texts. The following texts are available at the University Book Store.

Colin Jones, *The Great Nation* (Penguin)

Other readings available at the Canvas site for the course:
https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1099564

Work, Expectations, and Grades:

Written work: 3 tests, accounting for 45% of your final grade.
Scheduled for 1/26 (15%), 2/16 (15%), and 3/9 (15%)
3 papers – 2 short papers (1-3 pages) and a longer paper (5 pages),
accounting for 40% of final grade.
Due 1/17 (10%), 2/9 (10%), and 3/13 (20% including topic and outline)
Class work: **will account for 15% of your final grade.** This will include:
* participation in group discussions *(please bring readings to class)*
* in-class writing assignments (please also bring pen and paper to class)
* short exercises and essays to complete at home
* quizzes

Our course has been assigned a teaching associate.

Florentina Dedu-Constantin  
Email: fdconst@uw.edu  
Office: PDL C-236  
Office hours: Tues, Thurs 2:30-3:30

In addition to grading, Florentina will be available to discuss paper ideas and will run workshops and reviews sessions throughout the quarter.

IMPORTANT NOTES

1. Academic honesty and use of sources. Students in French 376, like all UW students, are expected to maintain “the highest standards of academic conduct,” and any misconduct will be taken very seriously. This includes cheating and plagiarism. Please consult the statement on “Student Academic Responsibility” prepared by the Committee on Academic Conduct in the College of Arts and Sciences:  

2. Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact the office of Disability Services which coordinates reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities:  
http://www.washington.edu/admin/dso/.

**PLAN FOR THE COURSE**
Do the readings for the session in which they are assigned. There will be quizzes.

Jan 3 – Introduction: Stability and Change  
Jones, from *Cambridge Illustrated History of France*, 127-35  
Davis, *The Return of Martin Guerre*, 1-26

Jan 5 – Religion and Religious Wars  
Beik, “Ecclesiastical Power and Religious Faith,” 164-200  
Jones, from *Cambridge Illustrated History of France*, 135-43  
Davis, *Martin Guerre*, 26-61
Archive to explore: [https://lib.byu.edu/collections/french-political-pamphlets/](https://lib.byu.edu/collections/french-political-pamphlets/) (browse under the appropriate monarch)

Jan 10 – Old Regime Society
Excerpt from Corneille, *Le Cid*, act 1
Beik, “The Monarchy and the New Nobility,” 134-161

Jan 12 – Selfhood and Identity in the Age of Humanism, Discovery, and Communications Revolution
Montaigne, “To the Reader” and “On the Cannibals,” 228-241
Aldus Manutius, “The Life of a Scholar-Printer,” 396-401
Davis, *Martin Guerre*, 63-125

Visit of Deb Raftus, Romance Languages Librarian
Writing Workshop: Friday, Jan 13

Jan 17 – Early Modern Politics I – Defining Tensions
Richelieu, *Political Testament*, 9-12 and 20-33 (Ch. IV is Richelieu’s portrait of Louis XIII. Worth reading if you plan to write your paper on kingship, but not required for class).
Collins, 36-38; 53-70

**FIRST PAPER DUE – uploaded to Canvas by class: 1-2 pages**

Jan 19 – Early Modern Politics II – The Fronde
From *Louis XIV and Absolutism: A Brief Study with Documents*:
“Mme de Motteville’s Account of the Paris Disturbances,” 19-29
“A Mazarinade Against the Queen and the Cardinal,” 29-35
Optional: selected Mazarinades in French (available on Canvas site)
Bercé, *The Birth of Absolutism*, 157-82

Jan 24 – Early Modern Politics III – “Absolutism”
From Beik, *Louis XIV and Absolutism* (I suggest you read in this order):
Louis XIV, “The King’s Own Words” (from his *Mémoires*), 204-215
Bossuet “Divine Right Monarchy” 166-173
Colbert, “Managing France,” 82-96
Louis XIV, *Mémoires*, 101-104
Saint-Simon, *The Age of Magnificence*, “Portrait of the King,” 137-150 (optional, if you want to write a paper on monarchy: “The King’s Day,” 160-166)
Review Session: Wed, Jan 25

Jan 26 – TEST 1

Mademoiselle de Montpensier, letters to Mme de Motteville, 27-61

Feb 2 – Crises of Conscience I – Religious Controversy
Beik, from Louis XIV and Absolutism, “Dealing with the Gallican Church,” “Dealing with the Jansenists” and “Dealing with the Huguenots,” 173-197
Collins, The State, 121-128
Jones, The Great Nation, 18-23

Sources: ARTFL database of French texts
http://artflsrv02.uchicago.edu/cgi-bin/dicos/baylepublic.pl?objectid=2072

Writing Workshop: Friday, Feb 3

Feb 7 – Crises of Conscience II – War and Poverty in an Time of Climate Change
Fénelon, letter to Louis XIV
Collins, The State, 152-163 and 180-190
Jones, The Great Nation, 23-28

SECOND PAPER DUE – uploaded to Canvas: 2-3 pages

Feb 9 – Regency, Bubbles, and Colonial Adventures
Montesquieu, from Persian Letters, letters 24, 29, 30, 35, 36, 37, 92, 140, 142
Jones, The Great Nation, 43-73

Feb 14 – A New Society
Voltaire, selections from Philosophical Letters; and “Le mondain”
Collins, The State, 239-254
Jones, The Great Nation, 159-170
Kwass, “Big Hair: A Wig History of Consumption in 18th-Century France,” 631-659

Review Session: Wed, Feb 15

Feb 16 – TEST 2
Feb 21 – Enlightenment, War and Attempted Regicide
Selected articles from the Encyclopedia of Diderot and d’Alembert
http://quod.lib.umich.edu/d/did/
Darnton, The Business of Enlightenment, 6-17
Lyons, “Censorship and the Reading Public in Pre-Revolutionary France,” 105-118
Jones, The Great Nation, 171-178 and 226-245

Feb 23 – Inventing and Contesting the “Public Sphere”
Voltaire, Treatise on Tolerance, 3-13
Jones, The Great Nation, 270-271
Darnton, “An Early Information Society,” 1-35

PAPER TOPIC DUE (posted to Canvas)

Writing Workshop: Friday, Feb 24

Feb 28 – Self and Society in the Age of Enlightenment
Voltaire, “Poste” from Dictionnaire philosophique
Hunt, “Torrents of Emotion: Reading Novels and Imagining Equality,” from Inventing Human Rights, 35-69

March 2 – Origins of the Revolution
de Toqueville, from The Old Regime and the French Revolution
Maza, “The Diamond Necklace Affair Revisited (1785-86): The Case of the Missing Queen,” 73-94
Chartier, “Do Books Make Revolutions,” from Cultural Origins, 67-91

In-class work on papers – bring materials: outlines, notes, bibliographies, etc. Post to Canvas.

March 7 – Catch-up and review session for Test 3: bring questions!

March 9 – TEST 3

THIRD PAPER DUE, uploaded to Canvas; Monday, March 13 – 5 pages

*** Syllabus subject to change, depending on interests and discussions