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135-BL The History of the European Public Sphere

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Q: What is a syllabus like in college?

A: The purpose of this syllabus is to clearly spell out to you what you will need to do in this class, what standards I expect you to meet, how much each assignment will be worth, and of course, what to read, when each assignment is due, and the topics we will be covering. The first part of the syllabus which tells you about expectations, grading standards and how the grade will be calculated is like a contract—I will not change it once I have handed the syllabus to you on a whim unless we discuss it together. The second part of the syllabus—the schedule of class readings and topics as well as assignment due dates may actually change because of how quickly we cover material, but we will always discuss changes in due dates together.

Q: Is this a Core Curriculum Class?

A: Yes, it is! As a Historical Perspectives course, this class is part of the Xavier Core Curriculum. It therefore addresses the following core learning objectives at the introductory level:

• 1a: Students recognize and cogently discuss significant questions in the humanities, arts, and the natural and social sciences.
• 5a: Students examine the diverse, complex, and interdependent nature of people in the world.

Q: Well, that seems pretty general. What are we actually doing in this class?

A: This class introduces students to the discipline of history: What do historians do? How do they figure out what happened in the past? How do they tell other people about what happened in the past? And why do historians even care about the past in the first place? We also intend to introduce you to the various kinds of questions historians ask about the past and the different kinds of historical approaches they take to answering those questions.

Q: Seriously, what are we doing in this class?

A: This class has a particular focus—it comes from one of the areas of historical inquiry. Some historical works focus on social issues, others on political processes, while others examine economic questions. This course will deal with a specific area of history called the history of ideas. What makes this class unusual is that it is blocked with PHIL 200—Philosophical Perspectives: The Public Sphere. Both Dr. Colella and I will be in the room almost all the time,
so that we actually comment on what the other is doing and saying from the viewpoint of two disciplines, history and philosophy. Consequently as we work on the history of ideas, we will be following Dr. Colella’s choice of readings—asserting that ideas such as those in Descartes’ *Discourse on Method*, Locke’s *The Second Treatise of Government*, Karl Marx's writing, and Habermas’ *The Post-National Constellation* all arise from the historical context—political, economic, and social—in which those individuals lived. Moreover, in each case we will see that concepts of public and private, as well as the role that individuals play in shaping their own public lives changed over time. Usually historians focus on a specific period of time, but because this class is blocked with a philosophy class, we will be taking a tour through European history to examine the world in which each of the philosophers assigned lived, including the social, economic, and political situations which dominated these times. By the end of the semester we can also ask ourselves whether philosophical ideas are so significant that they over-ride the historical context from which they came, or whether understanding their historical context help us to better understand the concepts of the public that each suggests. What aspects transcend the historical context? What aspects are grounded in those contexts?

**Q: Don’t historians basically just memorize names and dates? Is memorization pretty much the key to success in this course?**

**A:** Historians do need to know names and dates. Someone who said that the first president of the United States was a woman named Penelope Smith who was born in 1922 would be a spectacularly bad historian. But someone who memorized all of the US presidents and their dates of birth would not necessarily be a good historian. Historians do more than spew facts. They make arguments about the past—often about how and why change occurred, but also to explain how a person or community understood themselves and the world at a particular moment and place.

So, yes, you will need to be precise and accurate with regard to names, places, and dates in your assignments. But the assignments are not really focused on memorization. Instead, they require your active engagement with the course materials to learn and develop the skills historians use to write persuasively about the past.

In this respect, this course fulfills the History Department’s student learning objectives for 100-level classes:

**Identify sources**
- Students will differentiate between primary and secondary sources.

**Analyze sources**
- Students will compare two primary sources.
- Students will place a primary source within its historical context.
- Students will articulate the argument in a secondary source (other than a textbook).

**Construct arguments about the past**
- Students will discuss cogently questions and arguments about the past.
- Students will use appropriate evidence to build a logical
argument.

Explain change over time

• Students will explain how historians explain change over time.
• Students will explain the intersection of individuals, society, and environment in creating change over time.

Q: What materials and resources do I need for this course?

A: There are three (3) books assigned for this class.
You may purchase or rent these books
Also: Internet History Sourcebook: http://legacy.fordham.edu/halsall/index.asp
This website offers a huge number of documents categorized chronologically, geographically, and topically.

You also need consistent internet access, so you can use the Canvas website, download PDF readings, and use library databases. Please make sure your Canvas settings will allow you to receive course announcements in a timely manner.

Q: What are our assignments and how much are they worth?

A: You will be writing three papers and answering 10 questions out of 16 which I will pose on Canvas. You will also write three papers 5-6 pages long during the semester.

Paper #1: How does James Van Horn Melton’s The Rise of the Public Sphere in Enlightenment Europe both compliment Habermas’ concepts of the public sphere and critique them. 200 points
Paper #2: How did the French and Industrial Revolutions transform the concept of the public and its role in European politics? 200 points
Paper #3: Final Paper: Topic to be announced. 200 points.

EACH PAPER WILL NOT EXCEED 6 PAGES.

Ten questions each worth 30 points based on the readings: 300 points
Attendance and Participation: 100 points
Total: 1000 points

Q: What is your grading scale?

A: I base my grading on Department of History grading policies. My grades come in forms like B+/A- as well as straight A’s, B’s, etc. Carefully read the information below:

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY GRADING POLICY:
The Department of History places great value on the quality of your writing. We have developed a series of grading guidelines to help you understand how every member of our department determines the grade on a paper, please take the time to read these guidelines in order to understand how we evaluate your papers.

A: Exceptionally well-written and well-organized, strong argument, excellent analysis, insight into material, offering significant evidence and material as support, not repetitive or regurgitative.

B: By comparison this paper is not as well written, is lacking in one way or another (compared to "A"), may exhibit some mastery of material but is often repetitive or regurgitative.

C: Deficient in writing or organization, marked by a paucity of sources, "satisfactory," lacking analysis

D: Serious flaws in any or many of the areas mentioned above.

F: Didn't answer the question, incoherent, entirely missed the nature/goal of the assignment.

MY GRADING POLICY:
I will be using +/- grading. Often grades on papers may look like “B+/A-“ or “B/B-.”

Grade equivalents conform to the following pattern: A=93+; A-=90-92; B+=87-89; B=84-86; B- =80-83, etc.

To calculate your point equivalent, just add up the point equivalents by percent (example: if a paper is worth 200 points, then a B+/A- equals 91+88 or 179 points.)

Q: What are your policies regarding attendance and participation since we receive a grade?

A: ATTENDANCE and PARTICIPATION: While I do not regularly take attendance, I expect you to be in class unless, of course, you are ill or have some other valid reason. Although I may not always say something, I am acutely aware of students who miss an excessive number of classes. I reserve the right to lower your final grade for excessive non-attendance and/or excessive lateness to class. Participation is a tougher act because some of you are listeners rather than talkers. Moreover, those who talk may or may not really have something to say. Participating means really being part of the classroom experience whether you speak all the time or not. It means paying attention, taking notes, not studying for another class, writing notes to your neighbor, allowing your computer, smartphone or I-pad to distract you from our work, or staring off in another direction. Similarly, attendance goes beyond bringing your body into the classroom, it entails your active attention as a listener as well as a contributor to class discussion. YOU MAY NOT USE YOUR CELL PHONE DURING CLASS. TURN IT OFF. NO TEXTING OR OTHER SUCH ACTIVITY IS PERMISSIBLE. IF YOU USE A COMPUTER – IT MUST BE USED FOR NOTE-TAKING OR OTHER RELEVANT CLASS ACTIVITY NOT FACEBOOK, INSTAGRAM, TWITTER, etc.

Q: How can I improve my grade because it depends on so much writing?

A: Because one my major goals in this class is to teach you how to write expository, argumentative prose, you may rewrite any paper (except the last paper) once you have received your grade provided you see me about it to discuss what you need to do to improve your writing and historical reasoning. Rewriting means rereading what you have written, sometimes it will mean reorganizing your ideas so that they flow more smoothly. I make
extensive comments on papers, but simply substituting my suggestions will not automatically guarantee that your paper will receive a better grade. I will be looking for genuine effort and expecting that you will not repeat the same mistakes in a subsequent paper. All papers will be submitted through TURN-IT IN to assure that you have submitted your own paper and that you have not plagiarized your work.

**Q: What is plagiarism? How do you respond to plagiarism?**

A: Plagiarism is the use of someone else’s words or ideas without proper citation. The Xavier library has an excellent resource for anyone uncertain about what constitutes plagiarism and/or wants to know how to avoid it: [http://www.xavier.edu/library/xu-tutor/Preventing-Plagiarism.cfm](http://www.xavier.edu/library/xu-tutor/Preventing-Plagiarism.cfm)

I am including the Xavier University Statement on Plagiarism.

The pursuit of truth demands high standards of personal honesty. Academic and professional life requires a trust based upon integrity of the written and spoken word. Accordingly, violations of certain standards of ethical behavior will not be tolerated at Xavier University. These include theft, cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized assistance in assignments and tests, unauthorized copying of computer software, the falsification of results and material submitted in reports or admission and registration documents, and the falsification of any academic record including letters of recommendation. All work submitted for academic evaluation must be the student's own. Certainly, the activities of other scholars will influence all students. However, the direct and unattributed use of another's efforts is prohibited as is the use of any work untruthfully submitted as one's own. **Penalties for violations of this policy may include one or more of the following: a zero for that assignment or test, an "F" in the course, and expulsion from the University. The dean of the college in which the student is enrolled is to be informed in writing of all such incidents, though the teacher has full authority to assign the grade for the assignment, test, or course. If disputes of interpretation arise, the student, faculty member, and chair should attempt to resolve the difficulty. If this is unsatisfactory, the dean will rule in the matter. As a final appeal, the academic vice president will call a committee of tenured faculty for the purpose of making a final determination.**

One of the most important ways to avoid plagiarism is to cite your sources. You can do this through footnotes or endnotes. For information as to how to annotate your papers so that you cite your sources the following are some important resources for you.

1. If you are not sure about how to footnote, consult the XU library page tutorial sections which include style guides from the major manuals such as Chicago Manual or Style or Turabian.

2. Another great resource: Go to [www.owl.english.purdue.edu](http://www.owl.english.purdue.edu), click on non-Purdue instructors and students then select research and citation. When you click on Chicago Manual of Style, select humanities. In a history paper it is customary to use the
humanities style of notes. These two manuals describe many styles of annotation beyond the MLA style of notes common in other disciplines.

Q: Suppose I need an extension on a paper?

A: If you fulfill your end of the bargain—attend class regularly, complete assignments and come prepared, I will be more than willing to consider assisting you in problems arising from conflicts over due-dates on papers or exams with other courses. YOU MUST ASK FOR AN EXTENSION, DO NOT ASSUME YOU WILL GET ONE IF YOU DO NOT ASK.

Q: How do Office Hours Work? What’s their purpose?

A: My office hours are listed at the top of the syllabus. If you cannot get there when they are listed, you can always make an appointment. Office hours mean that I am in my office waiting to see students for reasons that you deem fit to see me. If you are having a problem with course materials, or any problem pertaining to this course, please come and talk about it. Postponing the conversation will only make things worse. There may be solutions to what seem like the most intractable problems if you come in and discuss them early. Therefore, office hours are not only about discussing a graded paper, rather they are about anything you want to discuss pertaining to the class. It is a great way for me to get to know you, and even vice-versa!

FINIAL THOUGHTS:

Just because I am a faculty member, I am not infallible. If you notice mistakes in the syllabus, they are probably just that—mistakes. Be sure to call them not only to my attention, but to everyone else’s attention as well. Similarly, I have bad days and good ones, just as you do. If something I say doesn’t make sense, it is likely that I simply didn’t say what I wanted to say clearly. Do not hesitate to make me explain again. You are probably not the only one who didn’t understand. IN SHORT – ASK QUESTIONS IF SOMETHING DOES NOT MAKE SENSE WHETHER IN THE SYLLABUS OR SOMETHING I HAVE SAID IN CLASS.

CLASS SCHEDULE

REMEMBER: THE DATES ARE APPROXIMATE AND MAY BE CHANGED

Week of January 11 and January 20:
Why do we start with the Scientific Revolution and When did it Occur? Why is the case of Galileo so important in understanding the reception of new scientific ideas in Europe?

No Class on January 18 in honor of Martin Luther King Day.
Week of January 25:
How do the events of the Scientific Revolution produce questions and new relationships pertaining to the public sphere?
Read: *The Scientific Revolution*, chs. 4-6 and conclusion.
Answer the question on the Scientific Revolution by February 1

Weeks of February 1, 8, 15, 22
During these weeks we will be reading and discussing the Enlightenment and the Public Sphere. **We will be reading The Rise of the Public in Enlightenment Europe during these weeks. The exact chapter selection will be announced as we progress.** You will be responsible for all the material in the book with the exception of Chapter 5. In your reading pay the most attention to the section on England and France, with a secondary emphasis on the Holy Roman Empire. **For the first week we will be reading the Introduction and Chapter 1 so that we can relate the material most closely to John Locke.** I will also be presenting historical material on the context of the events in England in the later 17th century which changed the position and power of the English Parliament.
Answer question on the Enlightenment by February 22
Answer question on the Industrial Revolution by February 29

Weeks of February 29, March 14 and March 21
Read: Sections of *The Rise of the Public in Enlightenment Europe*, particularly part III.
Answer question on French Revolution by March 14

YOUR PAPER ON MELTON will be due on March 4

Weeks of March 28, April 4
The Industrial Revolution in Europe—The coming of industrialization beginning in the later 18th century through the mid-nineteenth century changed concepts of the meaning of the public and those included in the public. During these weeks we will be examining industrialization, the rise of nationalism, changes in European politics all of which contributed to redefinitions of the public sphere.
Read: Merriman, chs. 14, 17, 18, 19, 20.
Answer questions on 19th century by April 13

Your paper on the French and Industrial revolutions will be due on April 6

Week of April 11
World War I, the interwar period and World War II.
Weeks of April 18 and 25
During these last weeks we will be examining post-World War II Europe, particularly trying to understand the attempts at European unification which have characterized the post WWII era. These efforts have played a very important part in discussions of the meaning of the public sphere or perhaps public spheres! Moreover, changing values in the 20th century have led to important questions about who is included in the public sphere and whether there is really such a concept as “one” public sphere. The introduction of new technologies has also played an important role in these conversations. We will attempt to understand the historical contexts of these changes and questions.
Read:
Merriman, chs. 27-30.

Answer questions on WWI and Interwar Europe by April 18
Answer questions on WWII and Post-War Europe by April 27
YOUR FINAL PAPER WILL BE DUE Friday, May 6.