Seminar in European History
History 533
Spring 2012

Wednesday, 4:15-6:45pm
Office Hours: Monday, 12:30-1:30pm
and Wednesday, 2:00-3:00pm or by appointment

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This seminar in European social and cultural history explores the meaning and uses of political culture in the modern era. Student research may focus on any period of European history from 1700 to the present. Political culture will be broadly defined to include the production and the reception of political discourses (visual and textual) as well as the practice of politics (from voting to protest movements). Students are free to explore any aspect of European politics/political culture, from government activities and political organizing to the impact of cultural forms (music/literature/religion) on politics. During the first month of class, we will analyze a variety of approaches to the study of political culture based on common readings. The rest of the semester will be spent engaged in individual research projects. Students will read and comment on each others’ papers. The goal of the course is to produce an article-length (25-30 pages) research paper. It is expected that students can read the appropriate foreign languages needed to do their research.

During the first month of class, as we discuss various approaches to the study of politics and political culture, you should decide on a topic and identify relevant primary and secondary sources. On February 15 you should be prepared to give a brief (10 minutes) presentation on the topic that explains your perspective, the questions you seek to answer, and your methodology. You will also hand in a four-page description of the topic and your approach as well as a preliminary bibliography of primary and secondary sources. There will be a brief (10 minutes) class discussion after each presentation designed to offer suggestions for improvement. Students will submit a first draft of their essays on March 27. First drafts will be distributed to the entire class via email. A hard copy will be distributed to the professor and a predetermined critic (another student) for the formal, in-class, discussion of the research essay. Each student will provide a formal critique of one research paper in a ten-minute presentation, which will be followed by a class discussion. These presentations will take place on April 4 and April 11. Student-critics must provide a written critique of the paper (2-3 pages) as well as give a formal oral critique in class. Students will then have the opportunity to rewrite their essay to address various criticisms. The final paper is due April 30. During the course of the seminar, students are expected to meet periodically with the professor to discuss their projects. Final grades for the course will be determined as follows: 25% for participation in class discussions and oral presentations and 75% for the research-based paper.

Required Texts:
There are no required books for the class. Common readings consist of scholarly articles. Most of these articles are available online through Jstor and other full-text databases. It is the responsibility of the student to download and print these articles in PDF format and read them
before the class meets. You should bring the articles to class as well. These articles are noted in the syllabus with an asterisk (*). Finally, there is one book chapter that is not available online. This reading is available in PDF format on Blackboard under the link labeled “course documents.” This reading is noted in the syllabus as (BB).

Academic dishonesty will be penalized by failure for the course. A student who engages in any form of plagiarism or academic dishonesty will also be asked to leave the graduate program.

Schedule of Class Meetings and Assignments:

**Week One**
18 January - Defining the Goals for the Class
Introduction to course and assignments

**Week Two**
25 January - Microhistory as Method: the Case Study as window to social and political processes


**Week Three**
1 February - Political Culture and Representation: The Production and Reception of Political Discourses (textual and visual)


**Week Four**
8 February - Political Culture and Practice: Enacting Politics through Action, Behavior and Performance

Week Five
15 February - **Oral Presentations**

All students will discuss their research topic and their approach in a 10-minute oral presentation. There will be general discussion and questions after each presentation (10 to 15 minutes).

**Written Material Due:** Four-page description of research topic and approach and a preliminary bibliography of primary and secondary sources.

Week Six
22 February - No Class

Meet individually with professor as necessary

Week Seven
29 February - No Class

Meet individually with professor as necessary

Week Eight
7 March - No Class

Spring Break

Week Nine
14 March - No Class

Meet individually with professor as necessary

Week Ten
21 March – No Class

Meet individually with professor as necessary.

**Week Eleven**
28 March – **Class does not meet / PAPERS DUE**
First draft of papers due (distribute a hard copy of the paper to the professor and your designated critic. Send copies via email to the whole class, using blackboard.)

Week Twelve
4 April – Class Presentations of First Drafts

First Group of Papers and Critiques
Four students will do formal critiques of student research papers (10 minutes each). After each critique, there will be a general discussion by the class of the paper (15 minutes). The student-critic will also submit a written critique of the research paper (2-3 pages) to the paper-writer and the professor.

Week Thirteen
11 April – Class Presentations of First Drafts

Second Group of Papers and Critiques
Three students will do formal critiques of student research papers (10 minutes each). After each critique, there will be a general discussion by the class of the paper (15 minutes). The student-critic will also submit a written critique of the research paper (2-3 pages) to the paper-writer and the professor.

Week Fourteen
18 April – No Class

Work on rewrites of the paper

Week Fifteen
25 April – No Class

Work on rewrites of the paper

30 April: Final (Revised) Research Papers Due by 3:00pm in my mailbox.