



# UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH

## HIST\*3820 Early Modern France

Winter 2026

Section 01

Department of History

Credit Weight: 0.50

### **Land Acknowledgement: Guelph**

The University of Guelph resides on the ancestral lands of the Attawandaron people and the treaty lands and territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit. We recognize the significance of the Dish with One Spoon Covenant to this land and offer respect to our Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee and Métis neighbours. Today, this gathering place is home to many First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples and acknowledging them reminds us of our important connection to this land where we work and learn.

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## 1 Course Details

### 1.1 Calendar Description

This course surveys French History from the Renaissance to the French Revolution. Students will examine the emergence of the powerful monarchy, 16th-century religious conflict and civil war, and the social, political and intellectual developments of the 17th and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, which culminated in the 1789 Revolution. 7.50 credits

### 1.2 Course Description

This course analyses select themes in Early Modern French history, as detailed below in "Activities" section of this syllabus. HIST\*3820 constructs knowledge of institutional change in state, family, economy, culture from 1450 to 1715, and develops understanding

of early  
modern French people and their worlds through current historiography and early modern  
primary sources. Classes involve a range of activities and media, including weekly  
document  
and scholarly article analysis as well as a series of writing assignments and a research  
essay,  
part of abundant writing practice in this course.

### 1.3 Timetable

From 5 January 2026 to 30 March 2026, with exception of 16 February (Reading  
Week/Family Day) HIST\*3820 will meet on Monday evening 7-9:50 p.m. [REDACTED].

### 1.4 Final Exam

HIST\*3820 Final Exam: 21 April [REDACTED] in-person exam, location t.b.a.

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## 2 Instructional Support

### 2.1 Instructional Support Team

Instructor: [REDACTED]

E-mail: [REDACTED]

Telephone [REDACTED]

Office: [REDACTED]

Office Hour: Thursday 4:15-5:15 p.m.

Available in person ([REDACTED]) on request.

Alternatively, book a meeting time through Microsoft Teams.

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## 3 Learning Resources

### 3.1 Required Resources

William Beik, *A Social and Cultural History of Early Modern France*. Cambridge and New  
York: Cambridge University Press, 2009 (Textbook). Cost: 47.95

Natalie Zemon Davis, *Society and Culture in Early Modern France*. Available as ACLS  
Humanities E-Book, via Library. (Collected Articles)

### 3.2 Additional Resources

Numerous other readings, including primary materials, are linked to the course website at  
[www.courselink.uoguelph.ca](http://www.courselink.uoguelph.ca), or will be found on Course Reserve at Library. (Readings)

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## 4 Learning Outcomes

Successful completion of HIST\*3820 W26 generates gains in 8 of 10 of the University of

Guelph's Learning Objectives including: literacy; sense of historical development of European and Canadian institutions; global understanding; moral and aesthetic maturity; understanding forms of inquiry; depth and breadth of understanding; independence of thought; and love of learning.

#### 4.1 Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course:

1. You will have developed sophisticated perspectives on change and continuity in Early Modern France, and a strong understanding of the importance of Early Modern French development to the emergence of European modernity, including aspects of the modern Canadian state.
  2. You will have gained familiarity with the historiography of Early Modern France, and will be able to articulate key concepts in this historiography.
  3. You have increased research, writing and debate capacities through execution of course assignments, including research essay, question sets, classroom interventions and creative work in presenting classroom Activity in one Wednesday class. Your ability to synthesize course concepts will be demonstrated in the in-class Final Exam in April 2026.
  4. You will have expanded your research and documentation capacity as well as presentation effectiveness. You will have a stronger sense of disciplinary practice, and the benefits of historical insight in addressing the contemporary world.
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## 5 Teaching and Learning Activities

\*\*\* denotes readings held on Reserve or linked to the course website as E-Books or digitized articles.

### 5.1 Lecture

Week 1 (5 January)

Topic: "Early Modern France": who, what, when, where and why?

Readings: William Beik, *Social and Cultural History of Early Modern France* (Cambridge, 2009): 1-14 and 367-71 (Appendix 1 "A brief synopsis of early modern French history.")

\*\*\*Fernand Braudel, *The Identity of France*, pp. 58-109

Marie Seong-Hak, *Custom, Law, and Monarchy: A Legal History of Early Modern France* (Oxford, 2021), <https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780192845498.003.0008>. Chapters 2 and 8 (optional)

## Week 2 (12 January)

Topics: Rural communities and rural economies

Readings: Beik, *Social and Cultural History*: 15-42

\*\*\*Philip Hoffman, "Land Rents and Agricultural Productivity: The Paris Basin, 1450-1789", *Journal of Economic History*, 51 (1991): 771-805

## Week 3 (19 January)

Topics: Family structures: gender roles; economic functions of household; marriage, inheritance, birth and death.

Readings: Beik, *Social and Cultural History*: 43-65

\*\*\* Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, "A System of Customary Law: Family Structures and Inheritance Customs in Sixteenth-Century France" and Micheline Baulant, "The Scattered Family: Another Aspect of Seventeenth-Century Demography", in *Family and Society. Selections from the Annales*, ed. R. Forster and O. Ranum, trans. E. Forster and P. M. Ranum (Baltimore, 1976): 75-116.

\*\*\*Sarah Hanley, "Engendering the State: Family Formation and State Building in Early Modern France", *French Historical Studies* 16 (1989): 47-80.

## Week 4 (26 January)

Topics: Nobility: "blood" and power. Noble role in government; noble ways of life.

Readings: Beik, *Social and Cultural History*: 66-97

\*\*\*Ellery Schalk, "The Court as 'Civilizer' of the Nobility", *Princes, Patronage and the Nobility. The Court at the Beginning of the Modern Age*, eds. Ronald Asch and Adolfe Birke (Oxford, 1991): 245-63

\*\*\*Stuart Carroll, "The Peace in the Feud in Sixteenth and Seventeenth-century France", *Past & Present* 178 (2003): 74-115

## Week 5 (2 February)

Topics: Cities: inside the Wall. Economic function; political culture; role in larger political system.

Readings: Beik, *Social and Cultural History*: 98-133

\*\*\* Richard Sennett, *Flesh and Stone* (New York, 1994) chapter 6 (pp. 186-211)

\*\*\*Philip Benedict, "More than Market and Manufactory: The Cities of Early Modern France", *French Historical Studies*, 20 (1997): 511-38

Week 6 (9 February)

Topics: Monarchy: evolution of "court"; strategies of dynastic; advancement; transition practices including regency; forms of "leadership".

Readings: Beik, *Social and Cultural History*: 134-155

\*\*\*Claude de Seyssel, *The Monarchy of France*, 38-68

\*\*\*Davis, *Society and Culture in Early Modern France*, ch. 4 "The Reasons of Misrule": 97-123

Week 7 (23 February)

Topic: The French Church: Back to Black:

Readings: Beik, *Social and Cultural History*: 164-203

\*\*\* Davis, *Society and Culture in Early Modern France*, ch. 6: 152-188 "The Rites of Violence"

\*\*\* Barbara Diefendorf, "Rites of Repair: Restoring Community in the French Religious Wars". *Past & Present* 214 (2012), 30-51.

Week 8 (2 March)

Topics: Instability of Monarchy 1559-1598: effects of religious strife, noble agitation and foreign intervention.

Readings: Beik, *Social and Cultural History*: 204-238

\*\*\*Guy Rowlands, "Louis XIV, Aristocratic Power and the Elite Unites of the French Army," *French History* 13 (1999): 303-33.

Week 9 (9 March)

Topics: Print culture; trends in art and architecture

Readings: Beik, *Social and Cultural History*: 313-339

\*\*\* Davis, *Society and Culture in Early Modern France*, ch. 7 "Printing and the People": 189-226

\*\*\*Michel de Montaigne, *Essays*, "On Cannibals"

\*\*\*René Descartes, *Discourse on Method* Parts I, II and III.

Week 10 (16 March)

Topics: Bourbon monarchy: "hard" and "soft" power

Readings: Beik, *Social and Cultural History*: 255-289

\*\*\*Chandra Mukerji. "Space and Political Pedagogy at the Gardens of Versailles." *Public Culture* 24, 68 (2012): 509- 534.

Week 11 (23 March)

Topics: Social mobility: the margins of society; bourgeois practices; noble struggles.

Readings: Beik, *Social and Cultural History*: 289-312

\*\*\*Davis, *Society and Culture in Early Modern France*, ch. 8 "Proverbial Wisdom and Popular Errors": 227-267

Week 12 (30 March)

Topics: New coalitions: Royal Absolutism and Enlightenment:

Readings: Beik & other readings: review.

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## 6 Assessments

### 6.1 Assessment Details

#### **HIST\*3820 Pre-Quiz: what do we know about Early Modern France? (0%)**

Mon, 5 January 7-7:30 p.m. in MCKN 233

The HIST\*3820 W26's "pre-quiz" is a short, non-evaluative (i.e. no grade attached) exercise to determine class participants' baseline knowledge and recall about French History. Pre-quiz will be made available on the day of the class on 5 January 2026.

#### **Weekly readings Activity (10%)**

Fri, 9 January. Sign-up on Courselink Groups

Weekly activity organization in Monday classes beginning Week II (12 January; 20-25 minutes of class time each week)

Activities based on class readings and documents. To be shared with the class on the preceding Thursday. Activity may include matching and fill-in-blanks; crossword puzzles; word smashes; Kahoots competitions etc. Activity will involve leading the class in completion of activity and discussion of the significance of the readings.

#### **Question Set: Travelers in Early Modern France. Their views & findings (15%)**

Thursday 22 January 11:00 PM, Dropbox in Courselink

A 1500-word response to questions based on a selection of travel Journal entries by [John Locke \(1675-1678\)](#) and Tobias Smollet (1763).

<https://archive.org/stream/lockstravelsinf0000lock#page/74/mode/2up>

<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/2311/2311-h/2311-h.htm>

#### **Research Paper Proposal (p/f)**

Wednesday 11 February, 11 p.m. Dropbox in Courselink

One page/5 source project description including 1. Title; 2. thesis or argument; 3. selection of identified sources. Pass/Fail, and results in **5% if successfully completed and feedback incorporated.**

#### **Question Set: Documents and articles Weeks III-VI (15%)**

Thursday 5 March 11:00 PM, Dropbox in Courselink

#### **Research Paper (30%)**

Thursday 26 March 11:00 PM, Dropbox in Courselink:

The research paper is based on a minimum of 10 scholarly articles; monographs; primary documents and the clear identification of thesis or point of view, supported by professional Traditional Humanities (Chicago) documentation.

### **Final Exam (25%)**

18 April location t.b.a:

HIST\*3820 W26 Exam is in-class [REDACTED] It involves the class materials and the readings and consists of short answers (document analysis) and essay topics circulated in advance.

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## **7 Course Statements**

### **7.1 HIST\*3820 W26 Policy on Late Assignments and Missed Participation**

Late submission of Question Set and Research Essay are penalized at rate of 10% per week when not accompanied by request for academic consideration. Please see “When you cannot meet a course requirement” below.

Students who miss a class are encouraged to cover missed activities through consultation of the “Content” section of the course website as well as the readings assigned on the weekly schedule.

### **7.2 TURNITIN**

HIST\*3820 uses Turnitin.com, integrated with the CourseLink Dropbox tool, to detect possible plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration or copying as part of the ongoing efforts to maintain academic integrity at the University of Guelph.

All submitted assignments will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to the Usage Policy posted on the Turnitin.com site. A major benefit of using Turnitin is that students will be able to educate and empower themselves in preventing academic misconduct. In this course, you may screen your own assignments through Turnitin as many times as you wish before the due date. You will be able to see and print reports that show you exactly where you have properly and improperly referenced the outside sources and materials in your assignment.

### **7.3 HIST\*3820 W26 Generative Artificial Intelligence policy**

HIST\*3820 W26 notes the spread of Generative AI at the University of Guelph. Our policy is to provide guidelines to source identification and Artificial Intelligence composition in HIST\*3820 writing assignments. First, all cited material must conform to [Chicago Guide Traditional Humanities](#) format. Such citation practice requires **precise page numbers of all sources that the student employs in the writing project**. The Professor will check one or more of the citations in all submitted assignments; submitted assignments which lack precise and accurate page numbers for citations will be returned to the student for revision. Second, the **Research Proposal** – due 11 February - **for the Research Essay** - due 26 March - will contain a precise and limited thesis and will provide a three-item scholarly bibliography as well as short annotation indicating proposed use of the source. Professor will provide feedback and **use the proposal as a means of assessing claims and documentation of the Research Essay** itself.



The following table is an appendix of **the American Historical Association’s Ad Hoc Committee on Generative AI in History Education Report**, published by the AHA in July 2025 and presented here with permission.

The table assesses GAI’s academic acceptability by Academic History Task. The AHA suggests that this chart may spur discussion on how HIST\*3820 students approach AI in their own academic work.

The table assesses GAI’s academic acceptability by Academic History Task.

<b>Task</b>	<b>Could this be acceptable use?</b>	<b>Under what conditions?</b>
Ask generative AI to identify or summarize key points in an article before you read it	Yes	Acceptable without explicit citation
Use an AI chatbot as a writing partner to help generate and develop ideas	Yes	Acceptable, may require explicit citation depending on circumstances
Ask generative AI to produce a starter bibliography	Yes	Acceptable without explicit citation only if each reference is checked and additional databases and sources are mined
Ask generative AI to produce a historical image for a paper or presentation	Yes	Image should be clearly marked as AI generated and with explicit discussion as to how the image was created. images should not be shared beyond the classroom
Ask generative AI to fix the structure or formatting of your footnotes	Yes	Acceptable without explicit citation
Ask generative AI to write an essay or chapter. Submit that essay or chapter as your own work	No	Never acceptable

Ask AI to sharpen the language of your essay/chapter, but not modify, add to, or replace the main points	Yes	Acceptable use without explicit citation only if changes suggested by AI are limited to grammar and syntax
Write an essay/chapter. Ask AI to add additional points	Yes	Acceptable with explicit citation only if fact- checked and adapted in your own words
Ask AI to summarize a book or article in your field. Use this as a starting point for critical engagement	Yes	Acceptable without explicit citation
Ask AI to summarize a book or article in your field. Reproduce that summary in your literature review without reading the book or article	No	Never acceptable, as there has been no engagement with the book or source itself
Use an AI generated summary of scholarship to critique another scholar's approach	No	Never acceptable, as AI frequently makes basic errors and there has been no engagement with the scholarship
Include a reference generated by AI in a footnote without checking the original	No	Never acceptable

## 8 University Statements

### Academic Integrity

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and it is the responsibility of all members of the University community – faculty, staff, and students – to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring. University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that discourages misconduct. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection.

Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor.

The [Academic Misconduct Policy](#) is outlined in the Undergraduate Calendar.

## **Accessibility**

The University promotes the full participation of students who experience disabilities in their academic programs. To that end, the provision of academic accommodation is a shared responsibility between the University and the student.

When accommodations are needed, the student is required to first register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS). Documentation to substantiate the existence of a disability is required; however, interim accommodations may be possible while that process is underway.

Accommodations are available for both permanent and temporary disabilities. It should be noted that common illnesses such as a cold or the flu do not constitute a disability. Use of the SAS Exam Centre requires students to make a booking at least 10 days in advance, and no later than the first business day in November, March or July as appropriate for the semester. Similarly, new or changed accommodations for online quizzes, tests and exams must be approved at least a week ahead of time. For students at the Guelph campus, information can be found on the [SAS website](#).

## **Accommodation of Religious Obligations**

If you are unable to meet an in-course requirement due to religious obligations, please email the course instructor within two weeks of the start of the semester to make alternate arrangements.

See the Academic calendar for information on regulations and procedures for [Academic Accommodations of Religious Obligations](#).

## **Copies of Out-of-class Assignments**

Keep paper and/or other reliable back-up copies of all out-of-class assignments: you may be asked to resubmit work at any time.

## **Drop Date**

Students will have until the last day of classes to drop courses without academic penalty. The deadline to drop two-semester courses will be the last day of classes in the second semester. This applies to all undergraduate students except for Doctor of Veterinary Medicine and Associate Diploma in Veterinary Technology (conventional and alternative delivery) students. The regulations and procedures for course registration are available in the [Undergraduate Calendar - Dropping Courses](#).

## **Email Communication**

As per university regulations, all students are required to check their <uoguelph.ca> e-mail account regularly: e-mail is the official route of communication between the University and its students.

## **Health and Wellbeing**

The University of Guelph provides a wide range of health and wellbeing services at the [Vaccarino Centre for Student Wellness](#). If you are concerned about your mental health and not sure where to start, connect with a [Student Wellness Navigator](#) who can help develop a plan to manage and support your mental health or check out our [mental wellbeing resources](#). The Student Wellness team are here to help and welcome the opportunity to connect with you.

## **Illness**

Medical notes will not normally be required for singular instances of academic consideration, although students may be required to provide supporting documentation for multiple missed assessments or when involving a large part of a course (e.g., final exam or major assignment).

## **Recording of Materials**

Presentations that are made in relation to course work—including lectures—cannot be recorded or copied without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a student, or guest lecturer. Material recorded with permission is restricted to use for that course unless further permission is granted.

## **Resources**

The [Academic Calendars](#) are the source of information about the University of Guelph's procedures, policies and regulations which apply to undergraduate, graduate and diploma programs.

## **When You Cannot Meet a Course Requirement**

When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons please advise the course instructor (or designated person, such as a teaching assistant) in writing, with your name, id#, and e-mail contact. See the Undergraduate Calendar for information on regulations and procedures for [Academic Consideration](#).