

CITY OF LIGHT: Paris in the 17th Century

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HIS 4956 – 3 CREDITS

THE PARIS RESEARCH CENTER - PARIS

2005 - Summer B

STUDY PARIS IN PARIS!

Professor Hatch of the Department of History is offering a seminar-style course in Summer B 2005 in Paris. This 3-credit undergraduate course is entitled City of Light: Paris in the 17th Century.

During the Age of Louis XIV—the Age of Absolutism, the Century of Genius—Paris was the center of the world. While dominating the political and military landscape, Paris became a focal point for major intellectual and cultural revolutions whose effects remain today. As the center of the learned world, Paris was not only a place but a pivotal moment in time.

The jewel of European learning, Paris is known for its High Culture, for brilliant innovations in philosophy, science, literature and the arts. Paris also set the stage for dramatic changes in the way scholars joined the public sphere. This course examines these changes by exploring how the printing press helped expand the venue of journals, magazines, and theatre audiences, and how learning and culture were tied to state-sponsored academies and new forms of patronage. But beyond High Culture there were other less esoteric cultural expressions. Here topics include not only the New Learning and the Nation State but the explosion of witchcraft trials and public executions, court intrigues and poisonings—deep disorders that illuminate the cultural devastation that helped define the Age of Reason.

Taught as a readings seminar, this course is based on classic secondary sources (cultural, intellectual, political) and readily accessible primary texts, most available in electronic format. This readings course emphasizes personal guided research and small-group discussion. The course is taught in English in seminar format. No prerequisites.

What is important in a course of this kind is that students have an opportunity to work closely with their professor, to conduct original research, and to assess for themselves how the findings of primary research differs from summaries found in textbooks. To this academic benefit, access to world-class libraries and the streets of Paris take us past the usual Academic Tourist Stops. To walk the streets along the Louvre, along rue Serpente and Les Halle—where subjects of our study strolled eating spicy sausages—will cement abstractions as no textbook could. Students will gain important background, detailed insight, and solid skills in reading, writing, and research.

Paris traces its origins to Roman times. But it is not only an historic city it is a 'walking city' – it brims with gardens, parks, and unrivalled architecture. Many of the institutions, buildings, and 'haunts' that gave shape to the lives of our historical figures still stand—and we will visit them. Notre Dame, the Luxembourg Gardens, the Observatoire, the Hôtel Montmor—each place evokes the people and times we study. The sights, sounds, and smells of Paris come alive as we walk the old market place near Les Halle, the university area around the Sorbonne, and the bubbling bistros of the Latin Quarter, which takes its name from the rule that University students in the area spoke only in Latin.

Paris has the finest museums and libraries in the world. We will visit the museums—and study some of the works there—and we will use the libraries, not as tourists but as workers conducting research. The National Library of France—the Bibliothèque nationale (BN, Paris)—is the richest repository for materials on the history and culture of France, and indeed, much else. It is a classically traditional yet quietly vibrant place to work.

An important innovation of this course is the variety of ways we conduct research. In addition to opportunities for 'hands-on' research with rare and often unique manuscript materials, students will apply old fashioned research methods to new fangled electronic texts—texts now easily accessible on-line with a basic web-browser. One of the best research websites in the world lives in Paris—Gallica.

An official site of the BN, Paris, Gallica is widely touted for cutting-edge innovations in scholarly electronic research. But be warned. Although access is easy research is hard. Combining old and new, this course aims to assist students in learning traditional skills in historical research by focusing on primary sources at the cutting-edge of electronic technology—here again France has pointed scholars to the future.

SUMMER SEMESTER

Summer Study Abroad (June 20-July 29, 2005) — Students spend six weeks immersed in the rich environment of Paris where they will live and study. Classes are given daily at the Paris Research Center and each program offers students 6-7 credits, numerous group activities and meals, cultural activities, site-visits, and guest lectures by distinguished scholars in their fields of study. All courses have been designed by specialists in their fields and have been selected for academic excellence. (UF credits: 6-7)

How to Apply:

Application deadline: 1 March 2005: Contact Barbara Dyer, 157 Dauer Hall: 392-2016, x256

Visit the Paris Research Center WebSite: <http://www.clas.ufl.edu/PRC/>

Questions? - Contact Dr Robert A. Hatch: ufhatch@ufl.edu