In this course, we will discuss the myth of the Sun King, Louis XIV, and life at the Chateau de Versailles. Louis XIV, the most powerful monarch of his age, established the quintessential court society. We will discuss how the court functioned and look at projections of royal power in the construction of Versailles, its gardens, court entertainments, diplomatic visits, theater, and fashion. Louis XIV also had many enemies. We will discuss the critiques of his reign and the challenges to his image.

Students will be expected to attend ALL classes, read the assigned texts, participate in class discussions, prepare a 500 word write-up relating to the readings due Tuesday of each week, write a final paper of 8-10 pages in length, and make class presentations. Attendance and participation is key to the course. Absences without a doctor’s excuse will result in a lower grade. Repeated tardiness will result in a lower grade.

Books for Purchase:
William Beik, *Louis XIV and Absolutism*
Madame de Sevigne’s Letters (Penguin)
Peter Burke, *The Fabrication of Louis XIV*
Moliere, *Don Juan and Other Plays*
Pierre Goubert, *Louis XIV and Twenty Million Frenchmen*
**Grading:**
Weekly Papers 50% (No late papers will be accepted.)  
Participation 20%  
Final paper 30%

**Week 1: Absolutism**
- Jan. 21: Introduction to Seventeenth-Century France  
- Jan. 23: Louis XIV and Absolutism

Readings:  

**Week 2: The Taking of Power**
- Jan. 28: The Imprisonment of Foucault and Madame de Sevigne’s reactions  
- Jan. 30: Madame de Sevigne’s description of Louis XIV and the Court

Readings:  
*Madame de Sevigne’s Letters* (Penguin edition)

**Week 3: Administrating France & The World of the Court**
- Feb. 4: Colbert & France  
- Feb. 6: Introduction to the Chateau

Readings:  
Beik pages, 16-185  
*Visit to Versailles* (online)  
Pierre Goubert, *Louis XIV and Twenty Million Frenchmen*, pages TBA

**Week 4: Versailles: Art and Architecture**
- Feb. 11: The Hall of Mirrors  
- Feb. 13: The Gardens of Versailles

Readings:  
Selections from *The Hall of Mirrors* (online)  
Chandra Mukerji, *Territorial Ambitions and the Gardens of Versailles* (online)  
Goubert, *Louis XIV and Twenty Million Frenchmen*, pages TBA

**Week 5: Court Society**
- Feb. 18: Court Society  
- Feb. 20: Court Society Part II

Readings:  
Le Roy Ladurie, *Saint-Simon and the Court of Louis XIV* (online)  
Norbert Elias, *The Court Society* (online)  
Jeroen Duindam, *Myths of Power*, Chapter IV (online)
Week 6: The King’s Image
   Feb. 25: The King’s Image
   Feb. 27: The King and Media
Readings:
   Beik pages, 199-204
   Peter Burke, *Fabrication of Louis XIV*

Week 7: Theater
   Mar. 4: Moliere
   Mar. 6: Moliere
Readings:
   Molière, *Don Juan and Other Plays*

Week 8: Louis XIV and Religion
   Mar. 11: The Protestants and Jansenists
   Mar. 13: The Catholics
Readings:
   Beik pages 166-196
   Goubert, *Louis XIV and Twenty Million Frenchmen*, pages TBA

Week 9: SPRING BREAK

Week 9: Women and Fashion
   Mar. 25: Queens and Mistresses
   Mar. 27: Fashion Prints and Visual Sources
Readings:
   Kathryn Norberg, “Women of Versailles” (online)
   Jennifer Jones, *Sexing La Mode* (online)
   Diane de Marly, Louis XIV & Versailles pages 27-50; 61-129

Week 11: Court Memoirs
   April 1: Duke de Saint Simon
   April 3: Madame
Readings:
   Memoirs of Madame (online)
   Duc de Saint-Simon, Selections (online)
**Week 12: The Taste for the East: Fashion, Food, Despotism**
April 8: Travelers
April 10: Stories of the East
Readings:
- Selections from *The Persian Letters* (online)
- Selections from John Chardin’s *Travels* (online)

**Week 13: Louis XIV’s Memoirs and Legacy**
April 15: Memoirs & Telemachus
April 17: Voltaire on Louis XIV
Readings:
- Excerpt from Louis XIV’s *Memoirs* (online)
- Selections from Fenelon’s *Telemachus* (online)
- Selections from Voltaire’s *Age of Louis XIV* (online)
- Goubert, *Louis XIV and Twenty Million Frenchmen*, pages TBA

**Week 14: The Court After 1715: Louis XV**
April 22: Louis XV
April 24: Madame de Pompadour
Readings:
- Thomas Kaiser, “Madame de Pompadour and the Theaters of Power” (online)
- Selections from Colin Jones, *Madame de Pompadour, Images of a Mistress* (online)
- Selections from Colin Jones, *The Great Nation* (online)

**Week 15: Marie Antoinette’s Court**
April 29: Portraits and Letters
May 1: Fashion and Criticism
Readings:
- Essays from Dena Goodman, *Marie Antoinette, Writings on the Body of a Queen*:
  - Larry Wolff, “Hapsburg Letters”
  - Mary D. Sheriff, “The Portrait of the Queen”
  - Sara Maza, The Diamond Necklace Affair-Revisited (1785-1786)
  - Lynn Hunt, “The Many Bodies of Marie Antoinette”

**FINAL PAPER DUE (8-10 pages) Monday, May 12th by 3pm (submitted via Email and Sakai)**

Note: Syllabus subject to change by instructor.