During the late 18th and early 19th century great upheavals shook the Western world as Revolutions broke out in North America, France, and the Spanish Americas. A new political culture of participatory democracy and republicanism swept aside the entrenched social order and status quo of the Old Regime. Imperial powers such as England, France and Spain were deprived of prized colonial possessions. New independent states such as the United States and Haiti were born in the late 18th century; by the 1820s, new states were born in Mexico and throughout South America. In 1815 John Adams made sense of the more than quarter center of political and social change with is summation: “The last twenty-five years of the last century, and the first fifteen years of this, may be called the age of revolutions and constitutions.” (The Works of John Adams, (Boston, 1850-6), X, 149).

Although historians often conceptualize the “Age of Revolutions” as a broad period from 1750 to 1848, in this course we will focus on just three revolutions: the American Revolution, the French Revolution, and the Haitian Revolution. We will explore the causes of these revolutions, the role of ideas and ideologies in the spread of revolution, and the outcomes of these revolutions by the end of this period in 1815. We will be attentive to the insights that comparative and global historical approaches can offer the historian of revolution and will explore the ways in which setting all three of these revolutions in the context of the broad Atlantic world will enrich historians’ understandings of these revolutions.

In the course of six weeks students will not only learn about three major revolutions, but will also hone their skills as research historians. We will explore a variety of primary sources from eyewitness accounts such as diaries and letters to print media such as political treatises and newspaper articles. By the end of the course, all students will produce an 18- to 25-page research paper based on primary source materials. Students may write on any of the three revolutions we explore in class. They may wish to adopt an explicitly comparative or “global” perspective on the revolution they study, but this is not required.
Because of the nature of summer session, readings will necessarily be heavy in the first four weeks of class: students are expected to read approximately 100 pages from books, articles, and primary sources for each class during the first four weeks of class. In the last two weeks of class there will be no assigned readings so that students can devote themselves to researching and writing their final papers.

**The final course grade will be based on:**

- Class participation in discussions (15%)
- Short analysis and presentation based on secondary and primary sources (2% each, 10% total)
- Research proposal (10%)
- Rough draft (20%)
- Oral presentation (5%)
- Final 18 to 25-page research paper (40%).

Attendance at all sessions is mandatory. I will deduct 5 points from your grade for each class that you miss. All students are expected to schedule two individual meeting with the professor to discuss their research projects; one of these meetings will be during our regular class period. Note that we will not meet as a class on June 14, June 21, and July 3rd. These are open day so that students can work on their final drafts. I will be available for individual conferences from 6 to 8 p.m. on those days.

This course meets SAS Core Goals S, T, T and V for Writing and Communication. This course also meets the seminar requirement for the History major and is open to all junior and senior History majors and joint History-Political Science and joint French-History majors. Other students may join the course with the professor’s permission. Enrollment is limited to fifteen students.

**Books (optional)**
Readings will be drawn primarily from these books; all readings will be available on Sakai.


**Other readings available on Sakai**
Weekly Schedule

Week One
Tuesday, May 29  Introduction to the project of the research seminar, ways of studying revolutions, and revolutions in the context of the Atlantic World; introduction to primary and secondary sources

Thursday, May 31  Revolutionary cross-fertilization in the Atlantic World

* First short analysis due in class *

Reading:
Gary B. Nash, “Sparks from the Altar of ’76: International Repercussions and Reconsiderations of the American Revolution,” in David Armitage (ed.) The Age of Revolution in Global Context. (Sakai)


Week Two
Tuesday, June 5  The America Revolution: the force of ideas? social tensions?
Micro and macro histories

** Second and third short analyses due in class**

Readings:
Wim Klooster, Revolutions in the Atlantic World, chapter 2, “Civil War in the British Empire: The American Revolution.” (Sakai)


*Sophia Rosenfeld, Common Sense: A Political History, chapter 4, “ Building a Common Sense Republic.” (Sakai)

Thursday, June 7  **French Revolution: violence and myth making**  
*** Fourth short analysis due in class***

Readings:

*Nina Gelbart, “The Blonding of Charlotte Corday.”* *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, vol. 38, number 1 (Fall 2004), 201-221. (Sakai)


**Week Three**  
Tuesday, June 12  **The Haitian Revolution: eyewitness accounts**  
*** Research proposals due in class ***

Readings:
Wim Klooster, “From Prize Colony to Black Independence: The Revolution in Haiti,” in *Revolutions in the Atlantic World*. (Sakai)


Thursday, June 14  **No class: individual conferences about research proposals**

**Week Four**  
Tuesday, June 19  **Representing crowds, interpreting violence, explaining turning points**  
***** Fifth short analysis due *****

Readings:

Paul Revere’s engraving of the Boston Massacre (image link on Sakai)


Thursday, June 21  **No class: individual, scheduled conferences**

Reading: no assigned reading

**Week Five**

Tuesday, June 26  **Workshop: how to revise a draft**

Rough drafts due by 5:00 p.m. on Monday, June 25th

Reading: two rough drafts, as assigned

Thursday, June 28  **Open day – film or topic to be announced**

**Week Six**

Tuesday, July 3  **No class: work on final drafts**

Reading: no assigned reading

Thursday, July 5  **Final presentations**

Final papers due in class