

HI 350-01

French Revolution and Napoleon

Spring 2025

Course Description:

This course explores one of the most pivotal and formative periods in European (and perhaps World) history, whose consequences continue to influence our modern world. We will consider how and why France evolved from a monarchy into a democracy and then into a military dictatorship over the course of a decade and the impact that this development had on France, Europe, and the world.

We examine the Ancien Regime (the Old Regime) before exploring the Revolution's origins, principal events, and animating ideas. It concludes with Napoleon as both a carrier of and traitor to the Revolution's ideals. We will also consider the wide range of schools of interpretation (Marxist, revisionist, and more) and ways of practicing history (social, cultural, diplomatic, political, and economic). This approach will prepare students for more significant discussions of nationalism and identity, human rights, inequalities stemming from material or legal conditions, the persistence of both popular and institutional violence, and Napoleon's achievements domestically and internationally.

Course Objectives:

Students who complete HI 350 will demonstrate:

Explain the causes, developments, and consequences of the French Revolution and Napoleonic era in France and Europe.

Building knowledge of the ways historians approach and analyze the past.

Differentiating between primary and secondary sources and learning how to read, understand, and evaluate these sources.

Improving writing through concise, argument-driven essays.

Increasing confidence in public speaking through respectful class discussions and debates.

Required Readings:

William Doyle, *The French Revolution: A Very Short Introduction*, 2nd ed., (Oxford University Press, 2019). ISBN: 9780198840077.

David A. Bell, *Napoleon: A Very Short Introduction*, (Oxford University Press, 2019). ISBN: 9780199321667.

Mike Rapport, *The Napoleonic Wars: A Very Short Introduction*, (Oxford University Press, 2013). ISBN: 9780199590964.

Jeff Horn, *The Making of a Terrorist: Alexandre Rousselin and the French Revolution*, (Oxford University Press, 2021).

Timothy Tackett, *The Glory and the Sorrow: A Parisian and His World in the Age of the French Revolution*, (Oxford University Press, 2021).

Additional Readings:

I will occasionally post other readings including primary sources on Canvas for additional discussion. This will be to give you a better perspective of the historiography surrounding the topics discussed this semester.

Course Requirements:

This course relies primarily on lectures and discussions. The tentative plan is to lecture on Mondays and Wednesdays, while we will discuss the reading assignments on Fridays. I encourage questions and feedback, as we learn best when we learn together. We come to the class with various backgrounds and interests, so I hope you will learn with me this semester.

Course Assignments:

Midterm Exam:

There will be a midterm exam worth 100 points. It will include identifications and an essay question. I will post a study guide at least two weeks before the exam.

Final Exam:

The final exam will have two parts. First, there will be a comprehensive essay worth 150 points. Second, you will have a non-comprehensive part covering the semester's second half worth 100 points.

Quizzes:

This semester, there will be ten quizzes covering class materials. Each quiz will be worth 10 points for 100 points. Readings and lecture materials are fair game for each quiz.

Semester Long Research Project:

I know that the idea of a research project is daunting. However, please rest assured that I will walk you through every aspect of this project. We will break it into manageable segments and work through this throughout the semester. The rationale for this assignment is to teach you how to research and sift through substantial amounts of information to find evidence to support your argument. I hope working through this assignment together will help you gain confidence, encourage critical thinking, and set you up for success after leaving this class.

The paper should be 2,000-2,500 words, excluding citations and works cited pages. I will provide more detailed instructions and rubrics in another document. This assignment is worth 300 points (30% of your grade).

Preparation and Engagement

This semester, I seek evidence that you are prepared to discuss the readings, ask questions when you are confused, and seek out meetings with me to discuss your progress. This is my promise to you: I will never criticize you for the ideas you share, but I will challenge you to think about what you believe and why you believe that.

This is worth 250 points. Half of this will come from written observations and questions about the reading that you submit before our discussion sessions. You will submit at least three thoughtful, open-ended questions and five analytical observations from the reading. The other 125 points will come from verbal engagement during discussion sessions. I expect at least one thoughtful contribution per session. You will lose points for cell phone usage, sleeping in class, or otherwise being distracting. I will warn you the first time.

Attendance is crucial for your success and will also factor into your grade. It is not enough to simply attend. You must always pay attention in class and do your best to stay awake. Cadets absent from a scheduled test due to athletic events, scheduled guard duty, or other VMI-mandated reasons must discuss their anticipated absence with me to arrange an alternative test date. This also applies to deadlines for all written work. If you know that you will miss one of our discussion sessions, I still expect you to submit the written component before the missed session with two additional questions and two additional observations. The 30% rule is in effect for this course, which means that if you miss more than 13 times (excused or unexcused), you cannot pass this course. I will give you a warning at 20%.

Cadets must read and understand the Institute's Work For Grade policies and procedures. Those policies are attached to this syllabus and are available in the Academic Regulations section of Regulation for the Virginia Military Institute.

Please note the requirement for a Help Received statement on ALL graded work. Failure to include a Help Received statement will result in an automatic zero for that assignment.

Student Behavioral Standards:

No cell phones should be visible during class unless I give you specific directions otherwise. I will give you a warning the first time, and subsequent violations will count against your participation grade.

You should only use laptops to take notes. Please do not become distracted by your technology.

Please do not eat in class, as it distracts everyone around you. Drinks are fine.

You must complete all assignments by the date due. Talk to me if you need help. Do not suffer in silence!

Let's treat each other with respect and professionalism this semester. Anything that violates this policy may result in asking you to leave the classroom for the day.

Grading:

Late Submissions:

Late penalties accrue at a rate of ten points per day. Please note that specific assignments, such as the Discussion Session Assignments, cannot be submitted late.

Extra Credit:

I will allow you to do two extra credit assignments this semester for ten points (5 points each): Attend a guest lecture (must be approved in advance) and write a 150-word analysis of the presentation. You should email me these assignments. Please note: Due to Canvas limitations, you will need to calculate your grade manually, as I will need to add this as an ungraded column in Canvas. I may offer additional opportunities as they arise throughout the semester.

Meetings with me:

This might be the most important component of your success this semester. I strive to be available to my students. You can reach me at almost any time via email. I respond to these

within 24 hours M-F and 48 hours on weekends. My responses are usually much faster. I will also be holding office hours as listed above. I treat office hours as an informal drop-by rather than scheduled times. I plan to be on Post MWF. I will work from home on T/Th, and I will be happy to chat via Zoom on those days if you can't make the formal office hours.

Statement Regarding Quizlets and Other Study Software:

I encourage you to use software such as Quizlets to help you study, but these must be used for personal use only. Please do not share these with other cadets in this class or other sections.

Statement Regarding Generative AI (ChatGPT and its competitors):

The Department WFG policy forbids the use of generative AI on any assignment submitted for a grade. I want to emphasize that you may not use ChatGPT or anything like it for anything you do in this semester's class. Please know there are easy ways to detect its use, so do not risk this. I will refer you to the honor court if you have used generative AI for an assignment. I want your thoughts this semester, not what computer software randomly spits out. If you have questions, please see me before you make a mistake.

Appendix A: Institute Work for Grade Policy

Development of the spirit as well as the skills of academic inquiry is central to the mission of VMI's Academic Program. As a community of scholars, posing questions and seeking answers, we invariably consult and build upon the ideas, discoveries, and products of others who have wrestled with related issues and problems before us. We are obligated ethically and in many instances legally to acknowledge the sources of all borrowed material that we use in our own work. This is the case whether we find that material in conventional resources, such as the library or cyberspace, or discover it in other places like conversations with our peers.

Academic integrity requires the full and proper documentation of any material that is not original with us. It is therefore a matter of honor. To misrepresent someone else's words, ideas, images, data, or other intellectual property as one's own is stealing, lying, and cheating all at once.

Because the offense of improper or incomplete documentation is so serious, and the consequences so potentially grave, the following policies regarding work for grade have been adopted as a guide to cadets and faculty in upholding the Honor Code under which all VMI cadets live:

Cadets' responsibilities

"Work for grade" is defined as any work presented to an instructor for a formal grade or undertaken in satisfaction of a requirement for successful completion of a course or degree

requirement. All work submitted for grade is considered the cadet's own work. "Cadet's own work" means that he or she has composed the work from his or her general accumulation of knowledge and skill except as clearly and fully documented and that it has been composed especially for the current assignment. No work previously submitted in any course at VMI or elsewhere will be resubmitted or reformatted for submission in a current course without the specific approval of the instructor.

In all work for grade, failure to distinguish between the cadet's own work and ideas and the work and ideas of others is known as plagiarism. Proper documentation clearly and fully identifies the sources of all borrowed ideas, quotations, or other assistance. The cadet is referred to the VMI-authorized handbook for rules concerning quotations, paraphrases, and documentation.

In all written work for grade, the cadet must include the words "HELP RECEIVED" conspicuously on the document, and he or she must then do one of two things: (1) state "none," meaning that no help was received except as documented in the work; or (2) explain in detail the nature of the help received. In oral work for grade, the cadet must make the same declaration before beginning the presentation. Admission of help received may result in a lower grade but will not result in prosecution for an honor violation.

Cadets are prohibited from discussing the contents of a quiz/exam until it is returned to them, or final course grades are posted. This enjoinder does not imply that any inadvertent expression or behavior that might indicate one's feeling about the test should be considered a breach of honor. The real issue is whether cadets received information, not available to everyone else in the class, which would give them an unfair advantage. If a cadet inadvertently gives or receives information, the incident must be reported to the professor and the Honor Court.

Each cadet bears the responsibility for familiarizing himself or herself thoroughly with the policies stated in this section, with any supplementary statement regarding work for grade expressed by the academic department in which he or she is taking a course, and with any special conditions provided in writing by the professor for a given assignment. If there is any doubt or uncertainty about the correct interpretation of a policy, the cadet should consult the instructor of the course. There should be no confusion, however, on the basic principle that it is never acceptable to submit someone else's work, written or otherwise, formally graded or not, as one's own.

The violation by a cadet of any of these policies will, if he or she is found guilty by the Honor Court, result in his or her being dismissed from VMI. Neither ignorance nor professed confusion about the correct interpretation of these policies is an excuse.

History Departmental Statement Concerning VMI's Policies Regarding Work for Grade

The Department of History’s policies regarding work for grade apply to three types of written work.

- 1. In the case of written quizzes, tests, or examinations, cadets are to do their own work without help from any other source.**
- 2. In the case of written book reviews or reading reports, cadets are supposed to have read every page indicated and must write the report without assistance.**
- 3. In the case of research papers, such as those required in HI 460 or other research projects in other courses, the research and writing must be done by the cadet alone under conditions specified by the instructor.**

When employing a word processor in the preparation of written work for grade, a cadet is allowed the use of computing aids including translators, spelling, style, and grammar checkers, but must acknowledge the use of these aids in the help received statement submitted with the written work. Cadets may not submit work for grade containing material that has been composed by artificial intelligence. Cadets may not use AI-assisted technologies in editing work for grade—editing includes making such changes as the addition, deletion, or reordering of words, sentences, phrases and/or paragraphs.

When undertaking work for grade for history courses, Cadets may seek tutoring assistance from recognized Institute sources such as the Writing Center, Academic Center and tutors authorized by the Institute. This assistance may include critical comments. Such comments are defined in the Institute’s Work for Grade Policy as “general advice on such matters as organization, thesis development, support for assertions, and patterns of errors. It does not include proofreading or editing.” The cadet must acknowledge the use of this assistance in the help received statement submitted with the written work.

If specifically directed by the instructor of a history course, cadets may avail themselves of peer collaboration on written work. Similar to tutoring assistance, peer collaboration may involve the provision of critical comments. Such comments are defined in the Institute’s Work for Grade Policy as “general

advice on such matters as organization, thesis development, support for assertions, and patterns of errors. It does not include proofreading or editing.” The cadet must acknowledge the use of peer collaboration in the help received statement submitted with the written work.

Unlike critical comments, proofreading and editing are expressly forbidden by the Institute’s Work for Grade Policy, to wit: “Proofreading means correcting errors (e.g., in spelling, grammar, punctuation). It is the last step taken by the writer in the editing process. In addition to the corrections made in proofreading, editing includes making such changes as the addition, deletion, or reordering of paragraphs, sentences, phrases, or words. A cadet may not have his or her work proofread or edited by someone other than the instructor.” Instructors in the Department of History who wish to employ proofreading and editing as pedagogical tools may be granted exceptions to this rule only if they have received written permission from the department head for a particular assignment.

In all cases, individual course assignments that deviate from the departmental work for grade policies must be approved by the department head in advance and must be explained to cadets in writing.

Cadets should consult the History Department web site, "Guidelines for Referencing Papers" for a fuller discussion of how to conduct written work in History.

Any non-written work for grade, such as oral reports, must be undertaken under specific conditions established by the instructor and will conform to the same spirit of the rules as pertain to written work.

If you have any doubts as to the application of these rules to any of your work for grade in History courses, consult your instructor.

Do not leave anything to chance.

EXCEPTIONS TO VMI WORK-FOR-GRADE POLICY

The Head of the History Department has granted permission for the following exception to VMI's Work-For-Grade policy:

Cadets enrolled in HI 103/104 are encouraged to seek assistance in preparing out-of-class writing assignments from the following sources, consistent with the governing policies of these sources: the VMI Writing Center, professional or cadet personnel under the auspices of the Academic Center, and tutors assigned by the Athletic Department. Additionally, cadets are allowed to engage in any level of peer review or collaboration authorized by their instructor with other members of their section or members of other sections taught by the same instructor. Cadets are encouraged to work with History GSS peer tutors, where they are authorized to receive additional levels of editorial or proofreading assistance designed to help them learn how to spot and address editorial or proofreading issues in their written work. Any type of assistance from any of the sources listed above must be explicitly authorized by the instructor and must be specifically acknowledged in "Help Received" statements.

ESL students are permitted two additional sources of critical commentary, editing, or proofreading as they prepare out-of-class written assignments: 1) any VMI professor; and 2) any cadet who speaks the native language of the person seeking help. For our purposes, an ESL student would be identified as any cadet who has taken the TOEFL, or cadets for whom English is not the first or native language and whose oral communication skills or written work demonstrates difficulties with the English language. As always, students who obtain help must specify clearly the nature of the Help Received.

Disability Statement:

VMI abides by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 which mandate reasonable accommodations are provided for all students with documented disabilities. If you have a registered disability and may require some type of instructional and/or examination accommodations, please contact me early in the semester so that I can provide or facilitate provision of accommodations you may need. If you have not already done so, you will need to register with the Office of Disabilities Services, the designated office on Post to provide services for cadets with disabilities. The office is located at 207 Carrol Hall in the Miller Academic Center. Please call or stop by the office of LTC Allyson Pierce, Director of Disabilities Services, for more information, 464-7741 or email piercesa@vmi.edu.

Course Schedule Spring 2025

