Course Overview and Student Learning Outcomes:

This course is an examination of the contemporary secondary literature on European history during the seventeenth century. Our focus this semester will include cultural, political and social history, including topics such as the Thirty Years War, Royal Absolutism and early capitalist culture. Students should come away from the course with a refined understanding of these topics, their importance and the controversies evident in current scholarship about them. A general background knowledge of the period is assumed. For review of the chronology and main issues, you may wish to consult a good undergraduate textbook, such as that by D.H. Pennington. In addition to introducing some of the current scholarly work on this topic, the course is also intended to sharpen your reading, analytical and writing skills.

Course Requirements and Grading Policy:

Your grade will be based on your written reviews of each of the books we are reading, along with oral presentations of selected articles. Papers should analyze the author’s thesis, sources and evidence, methodology and perspective. They should be roughly 4-6 pages in length. Late papers will not be accepted. Attendance (and participation) are mandatory.

Five written book reviews = 50% of course grade  
Comprehensive essay = 30% of course grade  
Three oral presentations = 10% of course grade  
Attendance and participation = 10% of course grade

The comprehensive essay (10-15 pages) must include coverage of all seven of our books, plus any of the journal articles which you deem relevant. The articles are from JSTOR and the lists of choices will be distributed separately. Each student will choose one article from each of three lists regarding the various topics pertaining to each.

Required Books:

Parker, *The Thirty Years War*  
Rabb, *The Struggle for Stability in Early Modern Europe*  
Elliott, *Richelieu and Olivares*  
Goubert, *Louis XIV and Twenty Million Frenchmen*  
Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches*  
Underdown, *Fire from Heaven*  
Cracraft, *The Revolution of Peter the Great*
Calendar of Meetings and Assignments:

Week 1 – Course Introduction
Week 2 – Discussion of Rabb
Week 3 – Presentation of Articles on the Seventeenth Century Crisis
Week 4 – Discussion of Parker
Week 5 – Discussion of Elliott; review due
Week 6 – No meeting
Week 7 – Presentation of articles on the English Civil War
Week 8 – Discussion of Underdown; review due
Week 9 – No meeting – Spring Break
Week 10 – Discussion of Schama, part 1
Week 11 – Discussion of Schama, part 2; review due
Week 12 – Presentations of articles on Louis XIV
Week 13 – Discussion of Goubert; review due
Week 14 – No meeting
Week 15 – Discussion of Cracraft; review due
Week 16 – Comprehensive essays due