Course Title: EARLY MODERN ENGLAND, 1455-1707
Course Code: HST4362
No. of Credits/Semester: 3
Mode of Tuition: Sectional
Teaching Hours: 3
Category of Major Prog.: Elective
Prerequisite(s): None
Exclusion(s): None

Brief Course Description
This course will focus primarily on the political history of Early Modern England, though it will not neglect social and cultural developments, particularly where they influenced – or were influenced by – political and dynastic developments. The main emphasis will be on “the world turned upside down”, the transition from a late medieval society, with power contested by a handful of noble magnates, to the England of the Glorious Revolution of 1688, when the foundations of the modern British state were laid. The influence of European-wide movements such as the Renaissance, the Scientific Revolution, the European Age of Discovery, and the Reformation on English society and culture will also be explored where appropriate.

Aims and Objectives
This course seeks to provide students with an understanding of the dynamics by which England underwent revolutionary change, setting the foundations of a polity recognizable today.

Learning Outcomes
a) acquire a sound understanding of a crucial period in English history that would have a significant global impact in ensuing centuries, particularly in the areas of religion and constitutional government;
b) develop critical and analytical thinking on how both individual agency and contingency are significant in historical causation;
c) learn to critically analyse film and television representations of the past in terms of accuracy and hidden subtexts relating to contemporary concerns;
d) be able to reconstruct, appreciate, and analyze Early Modern England, a time and place distant from contemporary Hong Kong;
e) enhance written and oral communications skills;
f) be able to analyze and synthesize an eclectic range of primary (film/TV) and secondary sources.

Indicative Content
I. Introduction
   A. The Dynamics of Transition
   B. The Waning of the Middle Ages

II. “The Winter of our Discontent”
   A. The Wars of the Roses
   B. The Lancastrian Triumph
   C. England under Henry VII
   D. Case Study: Richard III

III. “Renaissance Man” and the Royal Supremacy
A. The English Renaissance
B. The Reformation
C. Henry VIII and the Dissolution of the Monasteries
E. Case Study: Sir Thomas More

IV. Struggle for the Soul of England
A. The Reign of Edward IV
B. Protestant reform and the Book of Common Prayer
C. Counter-Reformation: The Reign of Mary Tudor
D. Case Study: Thomas Cranmer

V. Gloriana
A. The Young Elizabeth
B. The Question of Royal Legitimacy
C. Dissent and the Catholic Scourge
D. A Troublesome Cousin: Mary Queen of Scots
E. The Spanish Armada
F. The Virgin Queen
G. Case Study: Shakespeare, the Royal Propagandist

VI. My “new-found-land”
A. Economic changes and the “spirit of adventure”
B. Pirates or adventurers?
C. Early settlement of the New World
D. Puritanism, religious dissent, and the “Mayflower”
E. Case Study: Captain John Smith

VII. “Gunpowder, treason and plot”
A. James I and the Stuart Ascension
B. Witchfinder General: The persecution of Catholics and Witches
C. Case Study: Guido Fawkes

VIII. A Realm Divided
A. Charles I: A weak and vacillating King
B. The Prerogatives of Parliament and the “Divine Right of Kings”
C. The English Civil War
D. Case Study: Oliver Cromwell

IX. Interregnum
A. The Commonwealth of “Godly Men”
B. Political dissent: The Levellers and the Diggers
C. The Rape of Drogheda: The subduing of Ireland
D. Cromwell’s legacy
E. Case Study: Gerrard Winstanley,

X. The Restoration
A. Political compromises
XI. The Glorious Revolution
A. England’s last Catholic monarch
B. The Monmouth Rebellion
C. The Glorious Revolution and the triumph of the Whigs
D. The Act of Union (1707)
E. Case Study: Judge Jeffreys

XII. Early Modern English Culture
A. Popular culture
B. “All the world’s a stage”
C. The Elizabethan, Cavalier and Metaphysical poets
D. John Milton
E. Early Modern English art

Teaching Method
Lectures and in-class discussions will provide students with an understanding of the dynamics of political struggle in early modern England in the context both of broader European developments and of social and cultural change.

Measurement of Learning Outcomes
a) Students should demonstrate in class discussion, the individual assignment, and in the midterm and final examination an understanding and appreciation of a crucial period in English history that has had a significant global impact.
b) Students should show evidence of research in the individual assignment (as evidenced by citations and the inclusion of a bibliography) and through active participation in class discussions.
c) Students should demonstrate an understanding of the problematics of popular visual representations of history in the individual assignment.
d) Students should effectively demonstrate in the individual examination, discussions, and final examination a sensitivity and understanding of Early Modern England, a place and time far distant from contemporary Hong Kong.
e) Students should be able to write clearly, cogently and coherently to an acceptable standard in both their individual assignments and examinations, and be able to express their ideas clearly in class discussions.
f) In their individual assignment and in the midterm and final examination students should be able to effectively analyze and interpret primary (film/TV) and secondary sources in the context of Early Modern England.

Assessment
Students must write a critical paper on a topic relevant to the course. There will also be an in-class quiz and a final exam.

Continuous Assessment 70%
A. Class attendance, raising and answering questions in class, and active participation in formal discussions (15%)
B. Midterm (20%)
C. Term Paper (35%)
Final Examination 30%

**Required Reading and Viewing**

*Henry V* (1944) (DVD)

*Henry V* (1989) (DVD)


Starkey, David, *Elizabeth* (2003), Granada (DVD) (Selections)

**Supplementary Readings**


**Films**

*A Man For All Seasons*

*Lady Jane*

*Luther*

*Romeo and Juliet*

*Shakespeare in Love*

*Young Elizabeth*