



**SPRING 2017**  
**HIST 37005 / WGSS 3900**  
**Queens and Empresses in Early Modern Europe**  
**T-TH 3:00- 4:15—UNIV 001**

**Silvia Z. Mitchell, Ph.D.**  
OFFICE HOURS  
T-TH 4:15 to 6:00  
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UNIV 308

## RATIONALE

This course explores the lives and legacies of queens and empresses in early modern Europe within the wider context of gender, authority, and power in monarchical regimes. We will examine the whole range of queenly power: proprietary queens, consorts, regents, and dowagers. Although we will focus on individual figures, their political trajectories will be explored within broad political and international contexts. Students will be introduced to current scholarly theories of queenship, a burgeoning field of study that goes well beyond biography. Through the lens of queenship, for instance, we will seek to understand the institution of monarchy as well as the nature of European international politics during the early modern age. We will also study the role of queens and empresses in the dissemination and creation of culture. The course, therefore, acts as a general survey of early modern European history.

The course progresses thematically and chronologically so that we can think about change over time. We will devote roughly the first half of the class to the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and the second to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

## COURSE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course, students will be able to 1) differentiate between the various positions queens and empresses occupied in a monarchy and know the corresponding prerogatives and scope of influence, 2) understand the system of monarchy as a gendered institution, 3) identify the multiple ways in which queens and empresses shaped European international politics and culture, 4) recognize the mechanisms and power structures within which queens and empresses worked.

Students will sharpen their analytical, writing, and presentation skills as they participate in weekly discussions of readings and work on an individual visual project that they will present to the rest of the class.

## REQUIRED BOOKS

Carole Levin, *The Heart and Stomach of a King: Elizabeth I and the Politics of Sex and Power* (University of Pennsylvania, 1013), second edition, paper: ISBN 978-0-8122-2240-1 E-book 978-0-8122-0772-9

Deena Goodman, ed. *Marie Antoinette: Writings on the Body of a Queen* (Routledge, 2003) ISBN-13: 978-0415933957

Additional Readings will be made available to you.

**Assignments and Evaluation:**

1. **3 exams.** Prompts will be given in advance. 15 % each. for a total of 45 % of your grade.
2. **Class Participation. 30 percent.** Students are expected to take an active role in the class; being prepared is thus essential to be successful in this course. Besides the quality of your contributions, I will evaluate your ability to work with others. You will receive a grade at three points during the semester, each worth 10 percent. Thus your final participation grade will be cumulative, giving you enough time and concrete feedback to improve your grade if necessary.
3. **Queens and Empresses Culture Project. 25 percent.** Students will produce a visual or creative artifact—a power point, a short movie, a video game, a performance, or any other type of visual presentation—that illustrates the role of queens in the dissemination of culture across Europe from 1500 to 1800. More details on expectations and requirements for this assignment will be provided. We will have a topic workshop. Although each student will produce an individual presentation, they will work in groups in which topics are somehow related.

**Grade Distribution and Due Dates:**

Assignment		Weighted Value	Due Date
Exams	Exam 1	10 %	February 16
	Exam 2	15 %	March 30
	Exam 3	15 %	During final exam week, TBA
Class Participation	CP 1	10%	By week 4
	CP 2	10 %	By week 10
	CP 3	10 %	By week 15
Q & E's Culture Project		30 %	April 25-27
	Total	100%	

**Grading Scale**

100-99 = A+    98-95 = A    94-91 = A-    90-88 = B+    87-83 = B    82-80 = B-  
 79-78 = C+    77-73 = C    72-70 = C-    69-68 = D+    67-63 = D    62-60 = D-

## **Expectations and Policies**

Class time will be devoted to mastery of the material and the topic. All learning activities, including lectures, require active and substantial student involvement. It is crucial that students keep up with the readings and come to class. Students will occasionally lead discussions. In such cases, arrangements will be made in advance. I reserve the right to assign extra homework if participation lacks substance.

Attendance at all class sessions is mandatory. More than two unexcused absences will negatively affect your grade. I expect you to arrive to class on time. If you are late, however, I would rather you came in than missed class. Excessive absences and/or tardiness without a valid justification could result in a failing grade.

Late work will be penalized. Extensions will be granted only under compelling circumstances. However, exercise common sense. Although I am very strict about deadlines and attendance, I would like to emphasize that your **health and safety should come first**. You should communicate with me as early as possible if facing a personal or family emergency that may prevent you from coming to class or completing the assignment.

## **Academic Integrity**

Plagiarism or any sort of cheating will result in a failing grade for the entire course and, more than likely, the case will be referred to the Dean of Students Office. Cheating can take many forms, including, but not limited to, passing someone else's work for one's own, copying from another student's work, or using unauthorized material. Familiarize yourself with Purdue's policy on Academic Integrity. <http://www.purdue.edu/odos/osrr/academicintegritybrochure.php>

## **College of Liberal Arts Classroom Civility Statement:**

Purdue University is committed to fostering diversity and inclusion and welcomes individuals of all ages, religions, sex, sexual orientations, races, nationalities, languages, military experience, disabilities, family statuses, gender identities and expressions, political views, and socioeconomic statuses. Please respect the different experiences, beliefs and values expressed by everyone in this course. Behaviors that threaten, harass, discriminate or that are disrespectful of others will not be tolerated. Inappropriate behaviors will be addressed with disciplinary action, which may include being referred to the Office of the Dean of Students.

## **Disclaimer:**

In the event of a major campus emergency, the above requirements, deadlines and grading policies are subject to changes that may be required by a revised semester calendar.

## **SCHEDULE OF CLASSES**

Week 1—January 10-12: Introductions and Definitions

**Lecture/Discussion topic for the week:** The Political Fragmentation of Europe in the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

We will start developing working definitions of terms.

Start reading T. Earenfight, “Absent Kings: Queens as Political Partners in the Medieval Crown of Aragon.”

#### Week 2—January 17-19: Medieval Legacies

**Reading Assignment:** Finish reading Earenfight, “Absent Kings” for Tuesday. Read Earenfight, “Partners in Politics,” Cowans, “King Ferdinand, Marriage Concessions,”

**Lecture/Discussion topic for the week:** Problem of rule in Late-Medieval and Renaissance Europe.

**Concept of the week:** Understand the nature of queen’s power in the medieval state. Can we identify conditions that fostered or hindered their ability to participate in governing their realms? We will clarify the rules that governed dynastic succession and inheritance.

#### Week 3—January 26-28: Queens and the Union of Crowns

**Reading Assignments:** Start Reading Levin, *The Heart and Stomach of a King: Elizabeth I and the Politics of Sex and Gender*

**Lecture/Discussion topic for the week:** Reconfiguration of the Political Map of Europe

**Concept of the week:** This week, we will identify the implications of royal marriages, particularly that of heiresses. How did the marriage of an heiresses alter the map of Europe? Did they rule? What role did their king consorts played, if at all, ruling their domains? Who inherited after their deaths?

#### Week 4—January 31-February 2: The Rise of the Dynastic States

**Reading assignment:** Continue reading Levin, *The Heart and Stomach of a King: Elizabeth I and the Politics of Sex and Gender*.

**Lecture/Discussion topic for the week:** The Habsburg and Women and Habsburg Women

**Concept of the week:** Understanding the roles of queens and empresses in the formation, consolidation, and survival of Charles V’s global empire. What are the patterns of female sovereignty and formal participation in politics among this powerful dynasty?

#### Week 5—February 7-9: The Queen as King

**Reading assignment:** Finish Reading Levin, *The Heart and Stomach of a King: Elizabeth I and the Politics of Sex and Gender*.

**Lecture/Discussion topic for the week:** Proprietary Queens, different models

**Concept of the week:** The Gendering of Political Office. What difficulties occurred when the office of king was exercised by a woman? What strategies did she adopt? How was Elizabeth’s predicament different than Isabel of Castile and Mary I, her older sister?

Week 6—February 14: Review for Exam

February 16: Exam 1

Week 7 – February 21-23: Powerful Queen Regents, 16<sup>th</sup> century

**Reading assignment:** Crawford, *Perilous Performances: Gender and Regency in Early Modern France*, Introduction and chapter 1.

**Lecture/Discussion topic for the week:** Political Motherhood

**Concept of the week:** What are the constitutive elements of female regencies? What does the institution of regency reveal about the nature of monarchy, kingship, and gender discourses? Why did the office of queen regent become a quintessential feminine office?

Week 8 –February 28: Topic workshop for Q & E Culture Project

March 2: Students work on their own to come up with a topic.

Keep reading Crawford, chapters 2 and 3.

Week 9 – March 7-9: Powerful Queen Regents, 17<sup>th</sup> century

**Reading assignment:** Crawford, *Perilous Performances*, chapters 4, and 5. Mitchell, “Habsburg Motherhood,” and “Growing Up Carlos II”

**Lecture/Discussion topic for the week:** Regency in a comparative context: Anne of Austria and Marie de Medicis

**Concept of the week:** Why were women considered the best choice to assume power during royal minorities? What were the consequences of placing a king in a subordinate position? What were the potential pitfalls of regencies for the queen mothers and their sons? We will brainstorm some possible explanation to understand female regencies during royal minorities.

Topic for Q & E Culture Project Due in Class on Tuesday, at the beginning of the period

Week 10- SPRING BREAK

Week 11- March 21-23. Regency in an International Context

**Reading assignment:** Mitchell, TBA

**Lecture/Discussion topic for the week:** Geopolitics of Regency

**Concept of the week:** The minority of Carlos II of Spain put the continent on edge and thus the regency of his mother began under extremely inauspicious circumstances. This week, we will figure out ways to understand regencies moving onto the the realm of diplomacy, war, dynastic, and international politics. To what extent are the models of regency effective analytical tools? What are we missing? Why? How can scholars develop a more integrative analytical approach to regency that moves beyond gender without abandoning it all together?

Week 12—March 28: Review for the exam

**March 30: Exam 2**

Week 13—April 4-6: Traditional Queenship: Consorts, 1660-1800

**Reading assignments:** Orr, “Introduction: Queenship, Gender, and Court Studies.”

**Lecture/Discussion topic for the week:** Taking stock, Europe, Queens, and Politics after two centuries of transformation

**Concept of the week:** What elements determined the level of influence and power a queen consort enjoyed? How is this different (or similar) to that of queen consorts in the fifteenth century? How did the emergence of the royal mistress affect the position of queens in the French monarchy? Why is the court so important to analyze queens’ power?

Week 14: April 11-13: Eighteenth-Century Paradoxes

**Reading assignments:** Crawford, Chapter 6, Start reading Goodman, *Marie-Antoinette: Writings on the Body of a Queen*, Introduction, Chapter 2, Chapter 5, Chapter 7. We will divide the rest of the chapters. Start reading Goodman:

**Lecture/Discussion topic for the week:** Powerful Empresses: A perspective

**Concept of the week:** What was the constitutional position of the three empresses under discussion? How can we reconcile the ambivalent legal position of these empresses with their ability to yield such enormous authority?

Week 15: April 18-20

**Reading assignments:** Keep reading Goodman, *Marie-Antoinette*

**Lecture/Discussion topic for the week:** Why is Marie-Antoinette important for the history of queenship?

**Concept of the week:** We will discuss the readings this week, thinking about the implications of the French Revolution, including the execution of Marie-Antoinette, for the history of queenship and female authority. How can we reconcile the paradoxes of the eighteenth century?

Week 16: April 25-27

**Class conference!**

**Final Exam: TBA**