Administrative Unit: History and Social Sciences Department

Course Prefix and Number: HIST 340

Course Title: Philosophy of Revolution

Number of: Credit Hours: 3 Lecture Hours: 3 Laboratory Hours: 0

Catalog Description: Examination of the nature of revolution—intellectual, philosophical, economical, and political. Cross-listed as PHIL 340. Offered Spring.

Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): None.

Text(s): Most current editions of the following:


Heer, Friedrich. Europe: Mother of Revolutions. Praeger.


Voltaire. The Voltaire Reader. Penguin.

Course Objectives:

• To selectively study specific periods of history that have been labeled “revolutionary,” including not only political revolution—the archetype of which is most probably the French Revolution of 1789—but also scientific, economic, intellectual, and psychological revolution.

• To develop a mature and deep understanding of the concept of revolution: how it has changed in history and how it has changed history.

Measurable Learning Outcomes

• Demonstrate knowledge of the major events, ideas and results of what have been generally considered revolutions: scientific, political, intellectual, and economic.

• Analyze and intelligently discuss the primary writings of a select number of revolutionary thinkers: Rousseau, Voltaire, Marx, etc.

• Summarize significant philosophical debates over the nature of revolution.

• Demonstrate research ability based upon primary source material.

• Articulate revolutionary ideas and how they actually work out in historical time.

Topical Outline (major areas)

• Re-Volvere: The Concept of Revolution
Recommended maximum class size for this course: 35

Library Resources: Online databases are available at http://www.ccis.edu/offices/library/resources.asp. You may access them from off-campus using your eServices login and password when prompted.

Prepared by: Anthony M. Alioto

Date: May 10, 2005

NOTE: The intention of the master syllabus is to provide an outline of the contents of this course, as specified by the faculty of Columbia College, regardless of who teaches the course, when it is taught or where it is taught. Faculty members teaching this course for Columbia College are expected to facilitate learning pursuant to the course objectives and cover the subjects listed in the topical outline. However, instructors are also encouraged to cover additional topics of interest so long as those topics are relevant to the course’s subject. The master syllabus is, therefore, prescriptive in nature but also allows for a diversity of individual approaches to course material.