LAST/HIST 2912: Colonial Latin America

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Office Hours: T & Th - 1:00-1:45pm, and by appointment.

Location: Newcomb Hall 14

Course Credit

Undergraduate: 3 Credit Hours
**Course Objective**

In this course, students will explore the history of Latin America from the rise of the Inca and Aztec empires in the fifteenth century to the wars of independence in the early nineteenth century. The readings and lectures will give a broad outline of the major political, social, and economic trends of what historians call the Early Modern Latin American past. We will explore the first European contacts and how a variety of “encounters” have influenced the character of Latin American history and culture. We will devote special attention to matters of religion, economy and the environment.

By exploring these larger themes students may be able to better understand the very different worlds faced by Native Americans, Africans, Europeans, and others during this long and complex period of social and economic transformations. Students will be encouraged to compare the features and effects of colonialism in other regions of the world, including British and French North America, with those discussed in this course.

**Learning Outcomes:**

In light of the stated objectives, after completing this course students should be able to **identify** the main features and contours of colonial Latin American history; to **analyze** the demographic and gross economic trends of this period; to **analyze** the environmental impact of relevant economic activities developed during this historical period; to **compare and contrast** colonial processes in various regions, for example in Brazil vs. Mexico; to **analyze** key sources of colonial Latin American history; to **differentiate** between plausible narratives and dubious testimonies; to **write clearly and succinctly** about colonial history, and to read critically several types of texts – and also comment on the ‘historicity’ of films.

**Major Topics**
Economy: We will start with the main economic activities that major civilizations developed in Latin America and how those activities were transformed after the European arrival. We will study the system of production, labor and consumption introduced by the Spanish and Portuguese in order to fulfill their economic demands. We will explore the economic impact of silver mining in Potosí and Zacatecas and other extractivist endeavors. Finally, we will discuss about the early sugar industry in Brazil and the Caribbean and its impact on the transatlantic slave trade.

Environment: Another major topic of the course is the study of environment and the environmental legacies of the colonial period in Latin America. We will explore what environmental constraints limited the distribution of fully sedentary societies in Latin America. We will discuss about the Columbian Exchange and its impact in the region. We will talk about the early explorations journeys including the Amazon River. We will engage in discussions about the environmental impact of colonial mining and sugar production.

Religion: Religion played an important role in the history and transformation of Latin America. We will explore the role of the Catholic Church in the converting millions of natives and the impact on the everyday life. We will discuss about the Spanish Inquisition, including myths and realities around this institution. Moreover, we will explore the role of religious orders like the Dominicans and Franciscans in spreading the catholic faith. A special focus will be the on the Jesuit missions and how this religious order created commercial activities integrating local indigenous population. Lastly, we will discuss about the Baroque religiosity, its impact in the colonial society and the religious reforms by the end of the eighteenth century.

Classroom Expectations and Grading

Attendance: Attendance is mandatory. After 2 absences (excused or non-excused), I will begin to deduct points per each absence.
**Code of Academic Conduct:** All students must abide by the University’s Code of Academic Conduct, which prohibits any form of plagiarism, cheating, and incomplete citations. A copy of the code can be found online at [http://tulane.edu/college/code.cfm](http://tulane.edu/college/code.cfm). Violation of the Code on any assignment/quiz/exam will result in the student receiving a ‘0’ for that assignment.

**Special Needs:** Students with special needs must register with the Office of Disability Services (ODS) and submit the required documentation in order to be accommodated. Any student who has not registered with ODS, does not retain the right to demand accommodations.

**Assignment format:** Assignments must use a 1-inch margin; 12 point, Times New Roman font and be doubled spaced. Please use consistent citation format, such as MLA (Modern Language Association), or Chicago Style (University of Chicago Press). Please visit the library’s Basic Citation Guides resource at: [http://libguides.tulane.edu/citation](http://libguides.tulane.edu/citation).

**Canvas:** Make sure you make yourself familiar with Canvas as I will generally post assignments, readings, etc. Contact the help desk with any problems at (504) 862-8888.

**Cell Phones; Laptops; iPads; iPods; Tablets; Electronics:** All cell phones must remain off or silent during class. Laptop and tablet devices are not permitted in class.

**Student Athletes:** Please see me immediately if your team is active this semester.

**Grading**
Attendance and Participation: 10%
Map Assignment: 10%
Museum Visit Report: 10%
Film Critique: 10%
Book Reviews: 20%
Midterm Paper: 20%
Final Exam: 20%

Grading Scale
Students’ final grades will be determined according to the following scale:

97-100 = A+   87-89 = B+   77-79 = C+   67-69 = D+   0-59 = F
94-96 = A       84-86 = B        74-76 = C        64-66 = D
90-93 = A-      80-83 = B-      70-73 = C-      60-63 = D-

Assignments
** Late assignments will decrease your grade **
** All of the due dates for the assignments are listed in the syllabus **

Attendance and Participation (10%): Excessive tardiness or absences will negatively affect your overall grade because you cannot participate without attending class. Students are expected to come to classes prepared with a comprehensive understanding of the assigned readings. The participation grade will depend on contribution to class discussions, attentiveness, and critical analysis of the materials presented in class.

Map Assignment (10%): There will be one Map Assignment and students will be
expected to identify relevant geographical landmarks and other features, including cities, ports, trading routes, silver mines and sugar production regions.

**Film Critique (10%)**: Students will be expected to submit one film critique. The film critique is meant to engage the course material and for you to connect the material with the main themes of the course. They should be 2-3 (double-spaced) pages in length and adhere to the aforementioned ‘assignment format’ guidelines.

**Museum Visit Report (10%)**: As part of the course, students will visit the MARI Museum located at Dinwiddie Hall, Tulane. The museum gallery and collections include archaeological materials from the Americas, especially Central America, Mexico. More information can be found here [http://mari.tulane.edu/museum.html](http://mari.tulane.edu/museum.html)

Students should send 1 page (double-spaced) report after the visit answering general knowledge questions and their impression.

**Midterm Paper (20%)**: Students will demonstrate their understanding of course materials through the midterm paper. The midterm will require critical thinking of general themes presented throughout the course and will require you to use the course materials to develop an argument.

**Book reviews (20%)**: During the course, students will submit two book reviews by answering questions about the main argument of the authors and how they support their argument. The proposed books are:


**Final Exam (20%)**: Students will demonstrate their overall understanding of course materials through the final in-class exam. The exam will be comprehensive and will test your deep reflection of the general themes of the course.
**Required Readings**


**Other readings**


The rest of the all other readings will be available on Canvas.

** Additional readings will be posted on Canvas, under “Files” – These readings are labeled in the syllabus with the letters “CA”. The aims of these additional readings is to engage students with other approaches and points of view of the relevant main topic. **

**DISCLAIMER:** This syllabus is a guideline of what to expect over the course of the semester, however, it is subject to change.
COURSE SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS:

Week 1: Why Latin America?

- General Introduction/Guidelines
- READ: Restall/Lane to p.17;
- READ: Mills et al, “Introduction”

Week 2: The Americas before Columbus

- READ: Restall/Lane, 19-45
- READ: Mills et al, to p.26

Week 3: Iberians & Africans

- READ: Restall/Lane, 47-106;
- READ: Mills et al, 27-42
- Visit MARI Museum
- ** Assignment and instructions of Museum Visit Report **
Week 4: Contact, Conquest, & Resistance

- READ: Restall/Lane, 109-28
- READ: Mills et al, 43-90
- Screening of the Film Oro (2017) by Agustín Diaz Yanes

Week 5: The Crown Steps In

- READ: Restall/Lane, 129-72
- READ: Mills et al, 93-126;
- ** Assignment and instructions of Book Review (Mangan) **

Week 6: The Church Militant

- READ: Restall/Lane, 175-207
- READ: Mills et al, 127-64
- Book Review due before Midterm
Week 7: Daily Life in City and Country

- READ: Restall/Lane, 209-31
- READ: Mills et al, 167-198

Week 8: Extraction & Articulation

- READ: Mills et al, 218-33
- Midterm Paper due

Week 9: City & Countryside

- READ: Mills et al, 234-54

- ** Assignment and instructions of Book Review (Larkin) **

Week 10: Baroque Society

- READ: Mills et al, 255-96
- Book Review due

**Week 11: Imperial Reorientations**

- READ: Restall/Lane, 233-53;
- READ: Mills et al, 299-308

- Film screening of The Mission dir. by Roland Joffé

  - **Assignment and instructions of Film Critique**

**Week 12: Reforms**

- READ: Restall/Lane, 255-73
- READ: Mills et al, 309-65

**Week 13: Reactions**

- READ: Restall/Lane, 275-91
- READ: Mills et al, 366-94
- Film Critique due
Week 14: Independence

- READ: finish Restall/Lane; finish Mills et al

Week 15: Colonial Legacies

- Study Guide discussion and Course Wrap-up

FINAL EXAM: