HIST 365: Conquest and Colonization in Latin America

Spring 2022, Monday/Wednesday, 3:00-4:15 pm

Professor Daniel Richter

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Office Hours: Wednesday, 2:00-3:00 pm through Zoom and happily by appointment

Course Description: This seminar examines Latin America’s colonial history beginning with the pre-Columbian period, through the Conquest era during the 16th century, and then covering the over three centuries of Spanish and Portuguese colonial rule in Latin America from the late 15th to the 19th centuries. When Iberians (Spanish and Portuguese) and Africans set foot in the Americas in the late 15th century, indigenous societies had occupied for thousands of years the territory now known as “Latin America.” The arrival of Iberians and Africans from across the Atlantic Ocean transformed the region's built and natural environments, economies and cosmologies, transformed local and global food consumption, and dramatically changed the microbes and biota (animals and plants) that were present in Latin America and Europe. During the course, we will study the importance of Latin America in a global context after 1492 and learn how colonial subjects lived, worked, socialized, worshipped, and died in colonial cities, towns, and the countryside. We will examine interactions between Indian, Iberian, and African men and women in colonial Latin America and focus on how they contributed to the region becoming fundamental to the pre-capitalist and trading expansion of the world economy. Lectures and readings will include various sources such as letters, travel writings, court cases, paintings, maps, and artifacts of material culture. The course will also include the viewing of several films that dramatize the experiences of colonial lives. We will conclude by exploring the Age of Revolutions and Latin America's place in global political transformations between the mid-18th century and early 19th century. By the end of the course, students will be able to engage key questions about Colonial Latin America, including the important question about what is Latin America’s colonial legacy?

Please note that after the first week, we will have asynchronous lectures for the Monday classes and meet synchronously every week on Wednesdays during class time. This is designed to emphasize discussion during our class time and provide some additional flexibility to students.

Requirements and Grading System: Your grade will be based on the following requirements:

Weekly Responses (20%): To ensure you get as much out of our readings and discussions as possible, you will write a total of ten weekly entries submitted electronically through Blackboard over the course of the semester that will be due each on Wednesday before our class meeting. Please note that you must respond to the first four prompts (Week Two to Week Five) and then you can select which of the remaining six discussion prompts you submit. There will be approximately 14 prompts total. I will provide a midterm discussion grade after Week Five so everyone knows where they stand. If any of this is not clear, please ask me.

For the responses, I will post a new prompt to Blackboard by each Thursday afternoon and then you will have to write two to three paragraphs about the topic by the following Wednesday. These ten online responses are meant to be reaction pieces, but require you to pay attention to spelling, grammar, accuracy, and answering the question that is asked while directly engaging
with the course material. You should write your online responses to directly engage with content from lectures, readings, and viewings.

Midterm (20%): A study guide for the midterm will be circulated in class a week before the exam. The midterm will essay questions based on our course readings.

Paper One (30%): The first paper's prompt to write a four to five page double-spaced “Letter from the New World,” adopting the perspective of an actual colonial subject of your choice. The paper requires an annotated bibliography and attention to detail about what a primary source contains and explanation about what archival site your source originates from. Details and further instructions will be found on our Blackboard site. The paper will be due during Week 9 of the course.

Paper Two (30%): The second paper's prompt is to write a critical book review of either the Walker or Soriano books analyzing how the work provides innovative 21st century approaches to the study of Colonial Latin America. The paper will be due at the end of the semester. The Restall and Townsend books will be addressed on the midterm.

Class Procedures: Please come prepared with the assigned readings for each meeting, as well as with notes that you can reference during discussion.

Required Texts:
- Camilla Townsend, Malintzin's Choices: An Indian Woman in the Conquest of Mexico (Alburquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2006)

Recommended:
Mark Burkholder and Lyman Johnson, Colonial Latin America (10th edition, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018) Please be sure it is this edition or a relatively recent edition since earlier versions have less content and different pagination but you are welcome to purchase the 8th, 9th, or 10th editions.

Please note that all other readings are available on our Blackboard site.

Instructional Technologies
You will use your GMU credentials to log into Blackboard and GMU’s IT Support team recommends using Chrome or Firefox to optimize your experience and avoid incompatibility issues that can occur when accessing Canvas with other browsers.

1) You are responsible for keeping track of assignments and the class schedule.
2) If you need an extension for a paper assignment please email me at least 24 hours ahead of the deadline. If you do not, I cannot guarantee you will get the extension.
3) If you hand in late work without arranging for an extension, I will deduct points.
4) If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please notify me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at (703) 993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

Honor Code:
George Mason has an honor code and you are expected to adhere to it. It is as follows: “To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University community and with the desire for greater academic and
personal achievement, we, the student members of the university community, have set forth this honor code: Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work.” (https://oai.gmu.edu/mason-honor-code/)

If I suspect plagiarism or other forms of cheating I will submit my findings to the Honor Committee immediately. Thus it is best if you consult me with any questions about plagiarism before you hand in an assignment, rather than afterwards because I cannot help you then.

Composition Program Statement on Plagiarism (https://oai.gmu.edu/faculty-resource-center/syllabus-language-2/):

Plagiarism means using words, opinions, or factual information from another source without giving that source credit. Writers give credit through the use of accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or endnotes; a simple listing of books, articles, and websites is not sufficient.

This class will include direct instruction in strategies for handling sources as part of our curriculum. However, students in composition classes must also take responsibility for understanding and practicing the basic principles listed below.

To avoid plagiarism and meet the expectations of an academic audience to give their readers a chance to investigate the issue further, and make credible arguments, writers must:

• put quotation marks around, and give an in-text citation for, any sentences or distinctive phrases that writers copy directly from any outside source.
• completely rewrite—not just switch out a few words—any information they find in a separate source and wish to summarize or paraphrase for their readers, and provide an in-text citation for that paraphrased information
• give an in-text citation for any facts, statistics, or opinions which the writers learned from outside sources (or which they just happen to know) and which are not considered “common knowledge” in the target audience (this may require new research to locate a credible outside source to cite)
• give a new in-text citation for each element of information—that is, do not rely on a single citation at the end of a paragraph, because that is not usually sufficient to inform a reader clearly of how much of the paragraph comes from an outside source.

Writers must also include a Works Cited or References list at the end of their essay, providing full bibliographic information for every source cited in their essay. While different disciplines may have slightly different citation styles, and different instructors may emphasize different levels of citation for different assignments, writers should always begin with these conservative practices unless they are expressly told otherwise.

If student writers ever have questions about a citation practice, they should ask their instructor! Instructors in the Composition Program support the Mason Honor Code, which requires them to report any suspected instances of plagiarism to the Mason Honor Committee. All judgments about plagiarism are made after careful review by the Honor Committee, which may issue penalties ranging from grade-deductions to course failure to expulsion from GMU.

Course Paper:

Midterm: The will deal with our readings, assignments, and discussions in class. The exams will test your ability to analyze historical data and not just focus on the memorization of dates and events, although you will be tested on this information as well. Guides will be distributed in advance of the exams.
Exam Rules and Deadlines:
In accordance with university regulations, professors in the Department of History and Art History re-schedule exams after receiving documentation of a medical emergency or family emergency; often this documentation must be verified by the Dean of Student Life. Work-related or personal/family obligations are not adequate excuses for re-scheduling an exam or obtaining any kind of extension.

Academic Honesty:
In this course, you will be expected to adhere to the Honor Code at George Mason. It is your responsibility to read and understand the policy (available at http://oai.gmu.edu/honor-code/masons-honor-code/). We will discuss the use of citations and quotations throughout the semester. If you have any questions on how to cite a source, please see the professor. If you are caught plagiarizing or using material written by another student in your written work, or using notes during exams, you will fail the assignment and, in some cases, the course.

Office of Disability Services:
If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the ODS. See http://ods.gmu.edu.

Other Important Campus Resources:

Note about Communications:
Students must use their MasonLive email account to receive important University information, including messages related to this class. See http://masonlive.gmu.edu for more information. Blackboard will be used to post important messages, links for readings, and grades for papers.

Course Expectations, Requirements, and Policies
Expectations for Course Participation: Your active participation in the class is essential to your success in the course and attendance is expected at each online class.
Late Work Policy: Late work is generally penalized one grade per each class meeting that it is late. However, it is accepted without penalty given reasonable circumstances and provided that the professor has agreed to an extension at least 24 hours before the assignment is due.

Grading and Assessment
Grading Scale
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<th>Final Percent</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>93-100%</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>90-92</td>
<td>A-</td>
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<tr>
<td>88-89</td>
<td>B+</td>
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<td>82-88</td>
<td>B</td>
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<tr>
<td>80-82</td>
<td>B-</td>
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<tr>
<td>78-79</td>
<td>C+</td>
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Course Schedule

**Week One** (1/24-1/26)
Course Introduction/ The Portuguese and Spanish in the Atlantic World
Readings:
- Alvise da Cadamosto, "Description of Capo Bianco and the Islands Nearest to It" (1454/1455).

**Week Two** (1/31-2/2)
Indigenous Societies in Pre-Columbian Mesoamerica and the Andes
Readings:
- Interview with Alfred Crosby: [http://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/alfred-w-crosby-on-the-columbian-exchange-98116477](http://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/alfred-w-crosby-on-the-columbian-exchange-98116477)
- Restall, *Seven Myths of the Spanish Conquest*, Introduction.
Recommended:
- Burkholder and Johnson, *Colonial Latin America* (Hereafter CLA in the syllabus), Chapter One

**Week Three** (2/7-2/9)
Narratives of the Conquest in New Spain and the Andes
Readings:
- Christopher Columbus, "Letter of Christopher Columbus on his first voyage to America, 1492"
- Hernán Cortés, "Account of the City of Mexico," (1522)
Recommended:
CLA, Chapter Two

**Week Four** (2/14-2/16)
Portuguese Expansion in Colonial Brazil/The Catholic Church and "The Spiritual Conquest"
Readings:
- Restall, Chapters Four to Seven.
- "Letter of Pero Vaz de Caminha to King Manuel," (1500)
Viewing:
*Aguirre, The Wrath of God*
Recommended:
- CLA, Chapter Three

**Week Five (2/21-2/23)**

Slavery in Colonial Latin America/Indians in Spanish America and the Atlantic World

Readings:

Recommended:
- *CLA*, Chapter Four

**Week Six (2/28-3/2)**

Women, Gender, and Sexuality in Spanish America/The Colonial Economy, Migration, and Urbanization in Colonial Society

Readings:
- Finish Townsend, *Malintzin's Choices*.
- “Sor Juana Ines de la Cruz’s Letter to Sor Filotea,” in *Colonial Latin America: A Documentary History*, pp. 207-215.

Viewing: *Yo, la peor de todas*, available online:
*Yo, la peor de todas.Peli, completa.*

**Week Seven (3/7-3/9)**

Slave Communities and Slave Societies/The Meaning of Palmares

Readings:

Viewing:
*Quilombo*

**Week Eight (Spring Break)**

**Week Nine (3/21-3/23)**

Tobacco, Chocolate, and Precious Goods in Colonial Latin America/Midterm

Readings:
- *CLA*, Chapters Five and Six

**Week Ten (3/28-3/30)**

Environmental Transformations in Colonial Latin America/Scientific Knowledge in Colonial Latin America
Readings:

**Week 11 (4/4-4/6)**
Casta Paintings and Visual Culture/The Bourbon Reforms and the Lima and Lisbon Earthquakes

Readings:

**Week 12 (4/11-4/13)**
The Guarani War and Colonialism in Paraguay/Colonial Revolt in the Andes and Brazil

Readings:
  Viewing: *The Mission,* available through Blackboard.
  Recommended:
  -CLA, Chapter Eight

**Week 13 (4/18-4/20)**
The Haitian Revolution/History and Memory of the Coro Rebellion

Readings:
- Soriano, *Tides of Revolution,* All.
  Recommended:
  -CLA, Chapter 11

**Week 14 (4/25-4/27)**
Latin American Independence in a Global Context/Transatlantic Lives in the Age of Revolution

Readings:
  -Walker, *Witness to the Age of Revolution,* All.

**Week 15 (5/2-5/4):** Politics and Memory in Colonial and Post-Colonial Latin America

Readings:
  Recommended:
  - CLA, Chapters 12 and 13