

HIST 2371 Latin America, 1492-1820
University of Houston
Fall 2019, MW 1:00-2:30 P.M.

Professor N. L. A. Gharala

Office location: 641 Agnes Arnold Hall

Email: nlgharala@uh.edu

Office hours: M 11 am-12 pm; W 10 am-12 pm

DESCRIPTION

This class covers the colonial history of Latin America. Iberian cultural heritage and reasons for overseas expansion, nature of New World societies, colonial administrative structures, development of a complex racial hierarchy and the rise of Independence movements. This course provides an overview of Spanish and Portuguese colonies in the Americas from the late-fifteenth to the early-nineteenth century. We begin with an introduction to societies in the Americas, West Africa, and Iberia and conclude in 1820. The course moves chronologically, but emphasis is placed on thematic continuity and change throughout time and space. We will focus on several broad geographic areas within Latin America: the Andean zone, New Spain, the Caribbean, and Brazil. Uniting these regions are a set of common historical themes which we will explore, including labor and production, sexuality, gender, trade and exchange, religion, and politics.

STRUCTURE Class will consist of lecture, primary document analysis, and discussion of assigned readings. Lecture topics are presented next to the date of each class. Students should complete the assigned reading beneath each class where applicable. **Weekly questions** are provided to guide reading and discussion. Each exam will include a choice of three essay questions, two of which will be drawn from the weekly discussion questions.

GOALS

In this class, students will:

1. Identify and contextualize a key event in colonial Latin America, connecting societies within the region or in Africa, Asia, or Europe
2. Demonstrate ability to highlight historical causation, actions, and outcomes in reference to specific events as well as diverse ethnic, cultural, and social groups
3. Verbally explain social categories in the Habsburg and Bourbon eras
4. Synthesize information and texts to develop well-reasoned written arguments

OUTCOMES

1. Using a digital recording tool, students will describe a single historical event or process in the context of early Atlantic societies for a popular audience.
2. On the midterm exam, students will answer factual and critical questions that cover the basic course texts and class lectures.
3. Given an open-ended historical question on social groups or labels, students will be able to weigh two sides of an argument and express them verbally in a debate.
4. When given an essay prompt, students will be able to place terms and historical processes in context and highlight historical causation and outcomes in reference to specific events as well as ethnic, cultural, and social groups.

ASSIGNMENTS

Participation: Each week we will examine and discuss primary sources, films, and/or the textbook. **Weekly discussion questions** are included in the Course Schedule. Prepare your answer ahead of time. Failure to keep up with the reading will result in a deduction to your grade.

Assignment 1: A recorded **podcast** (5-7 minutes) to be graded on a rubric based on content and delivery due September 18. Choose one historical event that took place in colonial Latin America before 1700 and describe it for an everyday listener. Identify the causes of the event, its consequences, and historical actors involved. Relate this event to at least one other region or place in the Americas, Africa, Asia, or Europe.

Assignment 2: In-class **midterm** exam on October 2. The midterm will consist of 25 multiple choice questions, 10 definitions or short answers, and 1 map quiz of modern Latin American countries. Students will have the entire class period to complete the exam. Midterm covers Ch. 1-7 of the textbook and other sources introduced in class.

Assignment 4: In-class **debate** on November 4. Students will argue in two teams for or against a topic. The basic question will be, “Was socioeconomic class (*clase*) the most important factor in determining one’s status in colonial societies?”

Assignment 5: Take home final exam to be completed by the scheduled exam time. **Use only the course materials listed on this syllabus to answer questions.** The exam will be open book and consists of 2 long answer questions of about 750 words (3 pages) each. The exam will come from weekly questions.

EXTRA CREDIT OPPORTUNITIES

Extra credit 1: Attend any event on campus related to colonial Latin America or its legacies. For example, Annual distinguished lecture in Art History “Decolonizing Art History” by Charlene Villaseñor Black (Wed. Sept. 25 at 6:30 at Dudley Recital Hall, free). Write 2-3 sentences in an email to the professor to describe what you learned.

Extra credit 2: Visit The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston and write a one-page description of a piece of colonial Latin American art. If you were teaching a class on Latin American history (for high school or college students), how would you use this piece to help your audience better understand the colonial period?

GRADING

Participation 20%

Podcast 20%

Midterm Exam 20%

Debate 15%

Take-Home Final Exam 25%

GRADE SCALE

A 94-100

A- 91-93

B+ 88-90

B 84-87

B- 81-83

C+ 78-80

C 74-77
C- 71-73
D 61-70
F 60 & below

IMPORTANT DATES

Monday, August 26th: Last day to add this class.
Wednesday, September 4th: Last day to drop this course without a grade.
Wednesday, September 18th: First assignment due.
Wednesday, October 2nd: Midterm in class.
Thursday, October 31st: Last day to drop this class or withdraw with a “W.”
Monday, November 4th: Debate in class.
Monday, December 9th: Final exam due online during scheduled exam time.

RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, in accordance with 504/ADA guidelines, is committed to providing reasonable academic accommodations to students who request them. Students seeking accommodation must register with the Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) 713-743-5400 and present approved documentation to the professor as soon as possible.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

To cultivate an environment of academic integrity, the University of Houston expects students to abide by the University’s Undergraduate Academic Honesty Policy, found in the Undergraduate Catalog.
<http://www.uh.edu/academic-honesty-undergraduate>

COUNSELING

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) www.uh.edu/caps are available for students having difficulties managing stress, adjusting to college, or feeling sad and hopeless. You can reach CAPS by calling 713-743-5454 during and after business hours for routine appointments or if you or somebody you know is in crisis. The “Let’s Talk” program provides a drop-in consultation service at convenient locations and hours around campus. http://www.uh.edu/caps/outreach/lets_talk.html

CONDUCT

In this class, participation forms part of your grade. As such, students should not have computers or phones out during discussion so that all can be heard and included. Laptops are allowed for note-taking during lectures. Do not text or take pictures during class. Do not make recordings without prior permission from the professor. CLASS students are expected to abide by the University of Houston’s Code of Student Conduct: <http://www.uh.edu/dos/behavior-conduct/student-code-of-conduct/>

WRITING CENTER

The University of Houston Writing Center provides individual consultations for students working on all types of writing. Whether it is your first semester or your last, meeting with a trained writing consultant can provide another perspective on your paper or project that aids you in navigating the writing process from brainstorming to perfecting a final draft and any stage in between. You can make an appointment by visiting www.writingcenter.uh.edu or by calling (713) 743-3016.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK

Matthew Restall and Kris Lane, *Latin America in Colonial Times*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018)

LIBRARY MATERIALS AND LAPTOPS

If you are unable to purchase all required books, they are also on reserve in the library. You may check out laptops for free at the M.D. Anderson Library. All equipment requires an active Cougar Card to borrow. Learn more about this free service here: <https://libraries.uh.edu/services/equipment/>

READINGS AND E-RESERVES

Each week, students should expect 20-30 pages of reading from the textbook. Additional materials can be found online on Blackboard.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Part I: Contacts and Conquests

Week 1 Native Lands

8/19 Mesoamerica

8/21 Andean Societies

Read before class: Restall and Lane, Preface and Ch. 1 Native America

Weekly Question: Were the Aztec, Inca, and Maya civilizations also empires?

Week 2 Atlantic Worlds

8/26 Islam and Christianity in West Africa

8/28 West African Contacts with Iberia

In class, watch selections from [Njinga Rainha de Angola](#) (Angola, 2014)

Read before class: Restall and Lane, Ch. 3 Atlantic Africa

Weekly Question: What common ideas or networks connected West African societies?

Week 3 Iberian Precedents

9/2 NO CLASS

9/4 The Reconquest

Read before class: Restall and Lane, Ch. 2 Castile and Portugal

Weekly Question: What was the Reconquest and how did it shape Iberian worldviews?

Week 4 Conquests

9/9 Spanish Invasions

In class, [The Requirement](#) (1510)

9/11 Early Colonial Texts

Meet in Anderson Library Special Collections

In class, view codices and learn about library with Hispanic Collections Archivist Elizabeth Cruces

Read before class: Restall and Lane, Ch. 5 Native American empires

Weekly Question: How did different Native American societies use writing?

Week 5 Iberian Imperial Expansion

9/16 Exploration and Exploitation

Watch, *Aguirre, the Wrath of God* (Germany, 1972) [Watch remainder on Blackboard Reserves]

9/18 Global Empires

Read before class: Restall and Lane, Ch. 4 The Iberian imperial dawn

Weekly Question: What factors aided the Spanish and Portuguese conquests?

Week 6 Forced Labor

9/23 Slave Trading in the Ibero-Atlantic

Bring your laptop or tablet

In-class demonstration of the [Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database](#)

9/25 Coerced Indian Labor

In class, [The New Laws of the Indies](#) (1542)

Read before class: Restall and Lane, Ch. 6 The chain of conquest

Weekly Question: How did slavery shape colonial Latin American economies?

Week 7 Midterm

9/30 Exam Review

Read before class: Restall and Lane, Ch. 7 The incomplete conquest

10/2 MIDTERM

Part II: Building Colonial Societies

Week 8 Native Societies under Spanish Rule

10/7 Native Commoners and Elites

In class, Guaman Poma de Ayala *The First New Chronicle and Good Government* (1615) “How the corregidores and priests abuse the poor Indians of this realm.” Online: <http://www.kb.dk/en/nb/tema/poma>

10/9 Imperial Control and Frontier Societies

Read before class: Restall and Lane, Ch. 8 Native communities

Weekly Question: Who supported the Spanish in their conquests and why?

Week 9 Africans and Afrodescendientes

10/14 *Palenques, Quilombos*, and other Free Black Spaces

In class, watch [Mexico and Peru: The Black Grandma in the Closet](#) (PBS, 2011)

10/16 Enslaved People in Urban and Rural Environments

Read before class: Restall and Lane, Ch. 9 Black Communities

Weekly Question: How did daily life differ for enslaved people in cities and rural areas?

Week 10 Religion

10/21 Conversion

In class, Robert Edgar Conrad “Children of God’s Fire” in *Children of God's Fire: A Documentary History of Black Slavery in Brazil* (Penn State, 1994) 163-174.

10/23 Marriage and Family

Read before class: Restall and Lane, Ch. 10 The Religious Renaissance

Weekly Question: Why was conversion to Catholicism a central part of the colonization process?

Week 11 Methods of Control

10/28 Caribbean Plantations

In class, watch *La última cena/The Last Supper* (Cuba, 1976)

10/30 Inquisitions

Read before class: Restall and Lane, Ch. 11 Deviancy, discipline, and identity

Weekly Question: What do violence and punishment tell us about colonial societies and their values?

Week 12 Societies of Race, Class, and Gender

11/4 IN-CLASS DEBATE

11/6 Honor and Gender

Read before class: Restall and Lane, Ch. 12 Daily life in the city and country

Weekly Question: What was the role of patriarchy in everyday life?

Part III: The Bourbon Reforms

Week 13 Economic Reforms

11/11 Taxes and Tributes

11/13 Uprisings

Read before class: Restall and Lane, Ch. 13 War and reform

Weekly Question: How much control could the Bourbons exercise over ordinary people?

Week 14 Wars for Independence

11/18 Independence in Mexico

In class, “The Plan of Iguala” of Agustín de Iturbide, available online in [English](#) and [Spanish](#)

11/20 Independence in South America

Read before class: Restall and Lane, Ch. 14 Late-colonial life and Ch. 15 Independence

Weekly Question: What sparked different independence movements in Latin America?

Week 15 Take-Home Final Exam

11/25 NO CLASS

* Professor presents at Congreso Iberoamericano de Historia Urbana in Mexico City, more information online at: <http://2cihu.unam.mx/>

* Final Exam questions distributed on Blackboard *DUE MONDAY DECEMBER 9 AT 4 P.M.*

Read: Restall and Lane, Conclusion

Weekly Question: Who benefited from independence?