

## **HIS 710: Atlantic World Colloquium Fall 2015**

Tuesdays 3:30-6:20 pm MHRA 3209

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Office hours: Tuesdays 1-3 pm, Thursdays 9-10:30 am and by appointment (MHRA 2105)

### **Synopsis**

This course introduces students to the variety of approaches and themes that comprise one of the newest and fastest-growing fields in our discipline. The Atlantic World provides a useful conceptual and methodological framework in which to analyze the development of European empires; the creation of colonial societies; and the flow of people, commodities, and ideas between the Americas, Europe, and Africa in the early modern period (roughly 1400-1800). We will read a selection of major works that have defined the field, identify different perspectives and approaches, and trace the development of the historiography. We will also consider the challenges involved in comparative, cross-cultural historical research, and the limits of an Atlantic approach.

### **Course Goals and Objectives**

By the end of the course students should have developed significant skill in:

- recognizing a variety of interpretive approaches to Atlantic history
- analyzing historical monographs for their conceptual framework, methodological approach, and use of sources
- tracing trends and developments in the historiography of the Atlantic World
- developing their own analytic abilities, both written and oral

### **Readings**

\*Bailyn, Bernard. *Atlantic History: Concept and Contours*. Harvard University Press, 2005.

Crosby, Alfred. *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492*. 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition. Praeger, 2003. (Make sure you have the correct edition.)

Hancock, David. *Oceans of Wine: Madeira and the Organization of the Atlantic Market, 1640-1815*. Yale University Press, 2009.

\*Kupperman, Karen Ordahl. *The Atlantic in World History*. Oxford University Press, 2012.

Landers, Jane. *Atlantic Creoles in the Age of Revolutions*. Harvard University Press, 2010.

Linebaugh, Peter, and Marcus Rediker. *The Many-Headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, Commoners and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic*. Beacon Press, 2000.

Mulcahy, Matthew. *Hubs of Empire: The Southeastern Lowcountry and the British Caribbean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014.

Sachs, David Harris. *The Widening Gate: Bristol and the Atlantic Economy, 1450-1700*. The University of California Press, 1993.

Sensback, Jon. *Rebecca's Revival: Creating Black Christianity in the Atlantic World*. Harvard University Press, 2006.

Thornton, John. *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400-1800*. Second Edition. Cambridge University Press, 1998.

\* Available at UNCG bookstore

**Requirements**

Graduate work requires active, enthusiastic participation at all levels; deep understanding of the material; engagement with classmates; and careful, timely completion of assignments. You should make the most of every opportunity to develop your analytic abilities and to push beyond the limits of your current knowledge.

All written work should follow rigorous standards of grammar, punctuation, spelling, and style. Clear writing showcases clear thinking. Carefully edit and proofread everything you write. Graduate students should own, and consult often, the latest edition of Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (University of Chicago Press).

All papers should be written in standard format (Times New Roman 12" type or similar, double spaced, with one inch margins), with a clear title, a clear argument, and a brief introduction and conclusion that frame your main point. Please number your pages.

***Written and oral discussion*** (30% of final grade)

*Class presentations:* Each week during Unit 2 one or two students will give a brief presentation situating the assigned reading and its author in context, and frame some questions to lead our class discussion.

*Class participation:* Attendance; active engagement with the material; and pointed but courteous responses to your fellow students' ideas and analysis are expected. Cultivate the art of being a thoughtful listener as well as an articulate speaker.

***Short writing assignments*** (40% of final grade)

*Unit essays:* For each unit you will write a five to seven page analysis and comparison of the readings, drawing on and developing some of the themes we have addressed in our discussions, and critically appraising similarities in and differences between the works. The essays are due in class the week after we finish the unit.

*Book reviews:* Each week during Unit 2 one or two students will read an additional book which complements the assigned reading, and write a two to three page review for the class. Bring enough copies of the review to distribute in class (two for the professor), and a copy of the book to pass around. You will also give a *brief* oral presentation which summarizes the work and highlights its relevance to the week's readings and, where applicable, to other readings we have done.

***Final paper*** (30% of final grade)

This is an opportunity for you to make the Atlantic World part of your own intellectual tool kit. The paper can take a variety of forms, depending on your background and interests. In all cases, you will do significant outside reading, and the final paper will incorporate substantial analysis. I must approve your topic. You will receive more information about the final paper early in the course. **Due December 4.**

**Schedule of Readings****Unit 1: Defining the Atlantic World**

*Week 1 (August 18):* John Thornton, “The Formation of the Atlantic World, 1250-1600 (PDF); Alan L. Karras, “The Atlantic World as a Unit of Study” (PDF).

*Week 2 (August 25):* Karen Ordahl Kupperman, *The Atlantic in World History* (Oxford University Press, 2012); Alison Games, “Atlantic History: Definitions, Challenges, and Opportunities,” *American Historical Review* 111:3 (June 2006): 741-57; David Armitage, “Three Concepts of Atlantic History” (PDF).

*Week 3 (September 1):* Bernard Bailyn, “The Idea of Atlantic History,” in *Atlantic History: Concept and Contours* (Harvard University Press, 2005): 1-56; Martin W. Lewis and Kären Wigen, “A Maritime Response to the Crisis in Area Studies,” *The Geographical Review* 89:2 (April 1999): 161-168; Douglas Chambers, “The Black Atlantic: Theory, Method and Practice” (PDF).

*Week 4 (September 8):* Bernard Bailyn, “On the Contours of Atlantic History,” in *Atlantic History: Concept and Contours* (Harvard University Press, 2005): 59-111; Lara Putnam, “To Study the Fragments/Whole: Microhistory and the Atlantic World” (PDF); Peter Coclanis, “Atlantic World or Atlantic/World,” *The William and Mary Quarterly* 3<sup>rd</sup> Series 63 (October 2006): 725-742.

*Week 5 (September 15):* Martin W. Lewis, “Dividing the Ocean Sea,” *The Geographical Review* 89:2 (April 1999): 188-214; W. Jeffrey Bolster, “Putting the Ocean in Atlantic History: Maritime Communities and Marine Ecology in the Northwest Atlantic, 1500-1800,” *The American Historical Review* 111:1 (February 2008): 19-47; Paul W. Mapp, “Atlantic History from Imperial, Continental, and Pacific Perspectives,” *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, 63:4 (Oct., 2006): 713-724; Donald Meinig, “A Geographical Transect of the Atlantic World” (PDF).

**Unit 1 paper due on Tuesday, September 22.**

**Unit 2: Approaches to Atlantic History**

*Week 6 (September 22):* Alfred Crosby, *The Columbian Exchange*

*Week 7 (September 29):* John Thornton, *Africa & Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World*

*Week 8 (October 6):* David Harris Sacks, *The Widening Gate*

*Week 9 (October 20):* Matthew Mulcahy, *Hubs of Empire*

*Week 10 (October 27):* Peter Linebaugh & Marcus Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra*

*Week 11 (November 3):* Jon Sensbach, *Rebecca’s Revival*

*Week 12 (November 10):* David Hancock, *Oceans of Wine*

*Week 13 (November 17):* Jane Landers, *Atlantic Creoles in the Age of Revolutions*

*Week 14 (November 24):* Summation

**Unit 2 paper due on Tuesday, November 24.**

**Final paper due on Friday, December 4.**