

**History 206-01: History of Christianity in the Early Modern
Atlantic World, 1450-1800
(Online-Fall 2023)**



“Portuguese Ships Sailing under the Cross of the Order of Christ”, 1460.

Instructor: Mr. Jonathan Baier (jtbaier@uncg.edu)

Office Hours: Appointment via Zoom: <https://uncg.zoom.us/j/94820945375>

I will make frequent announcements that will be accessible in the “Announcements” tab on Canvas. Please monitor all communications whether by e-mail or through Canvas so that you can stay up to date throughout the semester. Please set up Course Canvas Notifications to help you promptly receive new e-mails and announcements.

COURSE INTRO/ SCOPE

Welcome to HIS-206-01! Christianity has become synonymous with European colonization in the Atlantic World’s Age of Exploration. This course will explore the historical link between the practice and spread of Christianity to better understand the development of identity and belief systems in the early modern world. Through the prism of Christianity, we will analyze the relationship that emerged between European imperial colonization, the Transatlantic slave trade, and the emergence of new concepts of race and identity. This will include European contact with Africans and the American Native peoples. Additional topics will include the Native resistance

and submission to Christianity and the reshaping of encountering populations in Africa and the Americas, transformations in religious practice, and the influence of religious interaction on the concepts of violence and peace. We will also seek out different perspectives as we look at these themes, events, and the impact of Christianity through the eyes of the forgotten people in society.

LEARNING GOALS/ OBJECTIVES FOR THE COURSE

(MAC) Goal 6: Critical Thinking and Inquiry in the Humanities and Fine Arts

In Critical Thinking and Inquiry (CTI) competency courses, students acquire a working knowledge of the foundational tools for reasoning, including constructing sound arguments, evaluating the quality of evidence, and forming judgments about the evidence, arguments, and conclusions of others in humanities and fine arts disciplines.

The CTI in the Humanities & Fine Arts SLOs:

1. Critically analyze claims, arguments, artifacts, or information.
2. Construct coherent, evidence-based arguments.

UNCG History Department Learning Goals:

Upon successful completion of course, students will:

- 1: Critically analyze claims, arguments, artifacts or information.
- 2: Construct coherent, evidence-based arguments.

Additionally, these SLO's are integrated in all course assignments to provide students with the foundation to satisfactorily meet these goals. The students will work towards the following historical learning objectives:

- 3: Historical Comprehension: Analyze the historical change over time through the lens of human agency and other systems or structures.
- 4: Historical Analysis: Conceptualize and analyze primary and secondary sources using historical thinking.

REQUIRED/ RECOMMENDED BOOKS

There is **No Required Purchase** for this course. Our readings will be provided as pdf files in the course canvas site.

The readings will consist of articles and excerpts from book chapters and/or primary source documents. You will find the readings on Canvas in the Reading tab under each week's Module.

The readings are integral to the required discussion boards and the weekly written assignments.

MODULES

To help facilitate weekly course organization, we will be using modules that are accessible on the Canvas course site. These weekly modules will include the lectures, assigned readings, videos, assignments, and discussions for the week. The weekly module will be posted on

Sunday night of each week and will be available, for your reference, throughout the rest of the semester.

PARTICIPATION

As an online course, we have limited opportunities for full class participation. However, you will have some opportunity to do so through discussions and assignments. If you experience a personal or family emergency that will affect your ability to complete any work, please contact me and contact the Dean of Students office and they will also inform all your instructors: deanofstudents@uncg.edu; (336) 334-5514.

WEEKLY WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS (MAC Goal 6, HIS SLO's 1, 4)

Weekly written assignments will help gauge your understanding of the assigned material. These will be worth ten points and consist of a 1–2-page written response to the primary documents of the respective week. You will be given a prompt that will require you to read the primary documents and explore their historical impact through your response.

The written assignments will be assigned each week on Sunday night. They will be due by 11:59 pm on the following Sunday. I will accept late assignments, but they will incur a 5 percent penalty per day late.

Unforeseen circumstances come up during the semester so I will be dropping the three lowest scored written assignments.

DISCUSSION BOARD (MAC Goal 6, HIS SLO's 3, 4)

Each week you will be assigned a Discussion board that will include **a series of questions/prompts**. You will answer the questions in your direct response. These questions will derive from the weekly readings and lecture. Additionally, to facilitate the discussion, you will be required to respond to at least **two other student responses** as a part of your discussion and course participation.

The Discussion boards will be accessible through the Discussion page under its respective weekly module. The initial instructions may vary week to week, so be sure to thoroughly read the requirements so that you can properly respond. Discussion instructions may also include additional readings. Some weeks may include additional reading or content within the discussion instructions. Response length will also vary depending upon that week's prompt.

The Discussion will be assigned on Wednesdays and will be due by 11:59 pm on the following Sunday. Discussions are meant to gauge your understanding of the weekly reading and to review the lecture material from the week. They will be graded on your ability to completely respond to and answer the prompts and your response to your classmates.

Unforeseen circumstances come up during the semester so I will be dropping the three lowest scored discussions.

UNIT EXAMS (MAC Goal 6, HIS SLO's 1, 2, 3, 4)

There will be four Unit exams during the semester. Each exam will cover only the period of weeks within that unit.

The exams will be a mixture of short answer and essay questions. While the exams will be open book, you will be expected to know and use information from all course sources of content during the respective unit.

Detailed instructions for each exam will be provided in Week's materials in which the exam falls. You will have four days to complete the exam.

General expectations will require 12-point font, and double spaced. Each exam will be uploaded in Canvas in the respective Exam assignment page. During the Exam week, exams will open on Wednesday night at 11:59 pm and will be due at 11:59 pm on the Sunday due date. Late exams will be accepted but will incur a penalty of 10 points per day.

***As a side note, Exam 2 will be due begin Tuesday night, October 3 at 11:59 pm and be due Friday, October 6 at 11:59 pm due to UNCG Fall Break beginning on Friday, October 6.**

GRADING

Your final grade will be comprised of the following:

Discussion Boards (20 points)	20%
Written Assignments (20 points)	20%
Unit 1 Exam (15 points)	15%
Unit 2 Exam (15 points)	15%
Unit 3 Exam (15 Points)	15%
Unit 4 Exam (15 points)	15%

Grades follow this scale: A = 93 and up; A- = 90-92; B+ = 87 to 89; B = 83-86; B- = 80-82; C+ = 77-79; C = 73-76; C- = 70-72; D+ = 67-69; D = 63-66; D- = 60-62; F = <60

COURSE SCHEDULE

*The readings are based upon topics that we will cover in the specified week. Readings may be updated or changed depending upon the circumstances of the course at the time. **Please keep track of any changes through Canvas announcements and by consulting the syllabus and modules each week.**

INTRODUCTION

Week 1: August 15 – August 20: Course introduction, the Atlantic World, and Why Christianity?

Secondary Readings:

Dana Lee Robert: "Christian Mission"

John K. Thornton: "Religious Stability and Change"

UNIT 1: Reformations and Foundations of Christianity in Europe

Week 2: August 21 – August 27: Christianity in the Late Middle Ages and Reformation

Monday, August 21: Last day to withdraw from course from tuition and feeds refund.

Primary Document Readings:

Thomas Aquinas, "Can it be Demonstrated that God exists?"

Selections from Martin Luther, including the 95 Theses.

Selections from Erasmus

Secondary Readings:

Ray C. Petry: "Emphasis on the Gospel and Christian Reform"

Week 3: August 28 – September 3: Radicals, Spirituality, and New Meanings in Theology

Primary Document Readings:

Selections from John Calvin

Decrees of from Council of Trent

Secondary Readings

E. Harris Harbison: "The Protestant Reformation"

Robert Kolb: "God's Gift of Martyrdom"

Week 4: September 4 – September 10: Science, Violence, Conflict, and God

Monday, Sept. 4: Labor Day Holiday

Primary Document Readings:

Selections from Spain in the during the Reconquest

Documents justifying the use of Violence in the spread of Christianity.

Francis Bacon, On Superstition and the Virtue of Science

Secondary Readings:

John Coffey: "Early Modern Religious Violence and the Dark Side of Church History"

Christine Caldwell Ames: "Does Inquisition belong to Religious History"

UNIT 1 Exam due on Sunday, Sept. 10 at 11:59 pm

UNIT 2: Christianity, Africa, and the Age of Exploration

Week 5: September 11 – September 17: God, the Pope, and the Sea

Primary Document Readings:

The Pope Supports Portugal's Conquest of Ceuta, 1436
Pope Alexander VI. "Inter Caetera"

Secondary Readings:

Greer, Allan, and Kenneth Mills. "A Catholic Atlantic"
James Muldoon. "Papal Responsibility for the Infidel"

Week 6: September 18 – September 24: The Christian God in Africa

Primary Document Readings:

Africans and Afro-Caribbean People Convert to Christianity, 1491

Secondary Readings:

James H. Sweet: "Parallel Belief Systems in Kongo"
John Thornton: "African Religions and Christianity in the Atlantic World"

Week 7: September 25 – October 1: Understanding Race in Colonization and Overseas Enslavement

Primary Document Readings:

Selections from Olaudah Equiano: The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano
Selections from Jacobus Capitein: *The Agony of Asar*

Secondary Readings:

Colin Kidd. *The Forging of Races*
Nathan Nunn: Religious Conversion in Colonial Africa

Week 8: October 2 – October 8: Transatlantic Slavery and Christianity

Friday, October 6: Last day to withdraw from course without incurring a WF grade
Friday, October 6: Beginning of Fall Break

Primary Document Readings:

Slaves Endure the Middle Passage, 1693
Ottobah Cugoano: Thoughts and Sentiments on the Evil of Slavery

Secondary Readings:

John Thornton: "The Mental World of the Captive"
Katherine Gerbner: *Christian Slavery*

UNIT 2 Exam due on Friday, Oct. 6 at 11:59 pm.

UNIT 3: Human Rights, Missions, and Conquest in the Americas**Week 9: October 9 – October 15: Native and African Spread of Christianity**

Wednesday, October 11: Classes resume from Fall Break

Primary Document Readings:

Fray Alonso de Benavides: "Reports of New Mexico Indians Eager for Conversion"

Secondary Readings:

Selections from Jon F. Sensbach: *Rebecca's Revival: Creating Black Christianity in the Atlantic World*.

Edward E. Andrews: "Christian Missions and Colonial Empires Reconsidered"

Week 10: October 16 – October 22: Catholicism and the Spanish Conquests

Primary Document Readings:

Two Spaniards Debate the Conquest and the Nature of Americans, 1547-1553

Spanish Priest Among the Pueblo Indians Complains of Harassment and Danger, 1696

Spain Requires the Indians to Submit to Spanish Authority, 1513

Selections from Alva Ixtlilxochitl, a Native account of early Spanish conquest and colonization

Secondary Readings:

Nancy M. Fariss: "Catholic Saints Among the Maya"

Week 11: October 23 – October 29: Aspects of the Human Rights Debate

Primary Document Readings:

Selections from Bartolome de Las Casas: *In Defense of the Indian*

Selections from Juan Gines de Sepulveda: "Democrates Alter"

Selections from Franciscus de Victoria

Secondary Readings:

Selections from Daniel Castro: *Another Face of Empire*

Week 12: October 30 – November 5: Concepts of "Heathenism"

Primary Document Readings:

Christians Discover "Heathen" Ideas of the Afterlife, 1636, 1777

Joseph Fish Preaches to the Narragansett Indians, 1768

David Hume, "On Miracles", 1748

Father Joseph Francois Lafitau, "Customs of the American Indians", 1724

Secondary Readings:

Jutta Wimmmler: "The Devil's Beatings"

Timothy J. McMillan: "Black Magic"

UNIT 3 Exam due on Sunday, Nov. 5 at 11:59 pm

UNIT 4: Conversion and Ideology in the Age of Revolution

Week 13: November 6 – November 12: “Conversion” Amongst the Native Americans

Primary Document Readings:

Hector St. John de Crevecoeur: Contrasts Americans and Europeans
 A Christian Convert Celebrates her Faith, 1768-1770
 A Luiseno Recollection of Mission Life, 1835

Secondary Readings:

Steven H. Hackel: “The Staff of Leadership: Indian Authority in the Missions of Alta California”
 Linford D. Fisher: *The Indian Great Awakening*

Week 14: November 13 – November 19: Resistance and Identity

Primary Document Readings:

Toussaint L’Ouverture, “A Black Revolutionary Leader in Haiti
 Toleration can be Joined to Religious Establishment, 1776
 A Radical Priest Marches in New Spain, 1810

Secondary Readings:

May, Cedrick. *Evangelism and Resistance in the Black Atlantic*
 Pestana, Carla Gardina. “Religion” in *The British Atlantic World, 1500-1800*.

**Week 15: November 20– November 26: Religion, Slavery, and the American Revolution
 Tuesday, November 21: Thanksgiving Break begins.**

Primary Document Readings:

Massachusetts Slaves argue for Freedom, 1773

Secondary Readings:

Haynes, Stephen R. *Noah’s Curse: The Biblical Justification of American Slavery*
 Ritchie, Daniel. “War, Religion and Anti-Slavery Ideology

**Week 16: November 27– December 3: Impact of Christianity on Global Revolutions
 Wednesday, November 29: Last Day of Classes**

Secondary Readings:

William G. McLoughlin: “The Role of Religion in the Revolution”
 Walter Rucker: “Conjure, Magic, and Power”

UNIT 4 Exam due on Sunday, Dec. 3 at 11:59 pm

Course Policies

COURSE ETIQUETTE

All interactions should always remain respectful. As we discuss the course material, critiques or disagreements to ideas is expected, but offensive, abusive, and disrespectful behavior will not be tolerated.

Discussion responses should remain relevant to the discussion topics. For example, using or posting offensive images and/or language that is outside the scope of course materials, posting suspicious websites, and advertising yours or others' businesses or products is prohibited.

ACADEMIC RESOURCES

The following are several services provided to you by UNCG.

The UNCG Library (<https://library.uncg.edu/>) has a wealth of books, articles, archival materials, and other media resources, computers, inter-library loan services, and knowledgeable staff.

The UNCG Writing Center (<https://writingcenter.uncg.edu/>) aids with writing assignments; contact staff members to set an appointment either in person or via instant-messaging.

If you have any needs or questions related to disability issues, please contact the Office of Accessibility Resources and Services (OARS) (<https://ods.uncg.edu/>). I want to make sure that you receive the best learning experience possible, so, if need be, OARS can be a wonderful resource. Remember that I cannot provide disability accommodations without paperwork directly from OARS.

If you encounter a technology problem, contact UNCG Information Technology Services as soon as possible. They have online, phone and walk-in options for technical support, all listed here: <https://its.uncg.edu/Help/>. If a technology problem poses the possibility of preventing you from completing coursework, communicate this to me as soon as possible.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY/PLAGIARISM

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro prohibits all forms of academic dishonesty. It is the student's responsible to know what constitutes academic integrity and academic dishonesty, and to be familiar with UNCG policies on academic integrity laid out here: <https://sa.uncg.edu/handbook/academic-integrity-policy/>. Students who engage in an academically dishonest act (such as plagiarizing part of a paper or cheating during an exam) will receive a grade of "F" in the course and be reported to the Academic Dean for possible additional disciplinary action, including expulsion from the university. Do not attempt it.

All writing assignments (reflections, assignments, midterm and final, etc.) are subject to a plagiarism check through the website <https://www.turnitin.com/>. This website compares the text of your paper to text up on webpages, in scholarly works, and within its massive database of student papers submitted to schools around the world.

SYLLABUS MODIFICATIONS

I reserve the right to modify or alter any part of the syllabus as the course progresses. It is your responsibility to keep up with class announcements regarding any changes and to review the syllabus frequently to make sure that you are staying on schedule.

RELIGIOUS OBLIGATIONS STATEMENT

It is expected that instructors will make reasonable accommodations for students who have conflicts due to religious obligations. Please plan with the instructor in advance of any conflict. For more information on UNCG's Religious Obligations policy, visit: https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B3_J3Uix1B4UeTV4Nk1vVFJoVFE/view?resourcekey=0-zRdXEmUA6rRI2RzKqo6u3g

ATTENDANCE POLICY FOR UNIVERSITY SPONSORED EVENTS

Regular class attendance is a responsibility and a privilege of university education. It is fundamental to the orderly acquisition of knowledge. Students should recognize the advantages of regular class attendance, accept it as a personal responsibility, and apprise themselves of the consequences of poor attendance. Instructors should stress the importance of these responsibilities to students, set appropriate class attendance policies for their classes and inform students of their requirements in syllabi and orally at the beginning of each term.