

University of North Carolina at Greensboro- Spring 2013
HIS: 207:06- Topics in Pre-Modern World History
“Pre-Columbian Empires Before and During the Age
Conquest: The Americas to 1600”
Course Syllabus

“The Most difficult thing to predict is not the future, but the past”

Instructor: Monica R. Ward

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Lecture: MHRA 1215, 6-8:50, Monday

Office Hours: MHRA 2103 Monday 3:45 to 5:45pm & By Appointment

Course Description: This course will explore and discuss the various cultures of the indigenous populations of the following empires before European contact: Aztec, Maya, Inca, and Cahokia. It will also discuss the European conquest of these empires, as well as the rise and fall of particular empires before European contact. This class will also investigate the cultural changes that conquest brought and how indigenous cultures responded to these changes. Lastly, students will explore the cultural legacies of each empire, as well as change and continuity within those legacies. As a result, students will be introduced to the historical field of Ethnohistory, and will become familiar with the use of anthropology and archaeology to study history in combination with written sources.

Primary Themes: Students will explore the following themes throughout the semester: cultural diversity before and after contact, change and continuity, cultural adaptation and accommodation, as well as the process of mythmaking/historical memory.

Learning Objectives- Students will be able to:

1. Use evidence-based reasoning to interpret the past coherently while developing and presenting an original argument, orally and in writing. [Historical Interpretation].
2. Use historical thinking to contextualize and analyze primary and secondary sources representing different points of view. [Historical Analysis]
3. Analyze historical duration, succession, and change in terms of human agency and larger systems or structures in a wide variety of places and periods. [Historical Comprehension]
4. Develop strong writing skills that can be applied to any other field of study by synthesizing class lecture notes, class themes, primary and secondary source readings together in a final essay assignment.
5. Understand the diversity and complex history of the Americas before 1600 and explain the reason for the collapse of these empires.
6. Explain why academic categories such as “pre-modern,” “pre-Columbian,” and “pre-history,” are Eurocentric terms and ignore the vast amount of history made by the indigenous populations of the Americans long before European contact.

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

Recommended Texts: *Latin American and Its People Vol 1 to 1830, Third Edition*, ed. Cherly E. Martin and Mark Wasserman (Prentice Hall, 2012);

All other weekly readings will be posted online via Blackboard, under "readings/documents."

Special Note: I recommend, but do not require a text because **you will be tested only on my lecture notes and the primary and secondary readings I post on Blackboard.** In addition, since there was no perfect textbook to fit the decisions I made in crafting this course, Cahokia and the Maya empire are totally excluded from the text as is. The textbook does provide information on some of my other lectures and is a useful tool if you are a not a good note taker. *However, if you are a good note taker, there is no need for you to buy the text.*

Course Requirements: 1. Reading assignments will be posted on Blackboard every week. You will be asked to turn in a written response to a question I ask via Blackboard on the readings, and they must be turned in at the beginning of class. *Hard copies only, NO email attachments unless you are absent.* The point of the assignment is to make sure you are reading, so focus on answering the question and demonstrating that you have read. Your answer does not have to be correct; it just needs to answer the question. Your response should be no longer than one page. *Late papers are not accepted and will count as a zero unless approved by the instructor under extreme circumstances.* The only time there will be no weekly assignment are the days that Essay 1 and 2 are due and the day of the midterm.

2. Participation (includes engagement in discussions, debates, as well as primary source activities in class, and attendance.) History is about discussion, learning how to talk about ideas and concepts and acquiring the ability to think critically. You must TALK to do this. Do not be afraid. There are no wrong answers in discussion. It is a chance for you to think for yourself. If you fail to speak in class, your participation grade WILL SUFFER. Please come see me in office hours if this is a problem.

3. Two short essays (5 pages, double spaced) will be assigned. The *first essay* will be on the material before the midterm, and you will draw upon your lecture notes, readings, videos, etc, to answer sufficiently. The question will ask you to include all of the indigenous cultures talked about before European contact. The *second essay* will be a primary source analysis paper, where you will answer a question and or series of questions based upon the primary documents you have read as well as the Townsend book regarding the conquests. **Grading rubrics** will be posted for each paper so students can have a better idea of how they will be evaluated. A rubric on how to write a good HISTORY paper, not an English paper will also be posted.

4. A Midterm exam: The midterm will be a traditional blue book exam, with 5 short identification questions on concepts, people, events, etc., and then 5 short answer questions based on major themes/concepts of the class.

5. A final take home essay (6-7) pages, double spaced) that will address the major class themes covered throughout the semester, supported with examples from the lecture, primary sources, secondary sources, archaeology, and Camilla Townsend's book. This essay will be more of a reflection, opinion piece, than your typical history paper. I like to

call it a “think piece” where you will be asked to think about the class as a whole and your own opinion is welcome. This is the only time you will NOT hand in a hard copy of your exam, but submit it through **Safe Assignment via Blackboard**. I will demonstrate how to use **Safe Assignment** the last week of class.

Attendance: Attendance is NOT required: however, if you do not attend class it is unlikely you will do well in the course. *All essays and tests are based on the LECTURES and primary sources/secondary sources discussed in class.* The textbook is to be used as a guide and to fill you in with background information and help you out with vocabulary, etc. In order to do well, LECTURE NOTES are essential. In addition, attendance is a huge part of your participation grade. We also meet once a week, so if you miss once class, you are missing two lectures in one. Students missing more than x classes for whatever reason risk losing x points. Thus, **there is no penalty toward your final grade for absences**, but you must take responsibility and come see me if you miss class to catch up on what you missed.

Grading:

Weekly Writing Reflections = 10 %

Essay 1 = 10%

Essay 2 = 15 %

Midterm = 20 %

Participation= 20 %

Final Essay = 25 %

Extra Credit= Offered only if the student asks the instructor personally, and based upon the situation I will evaluate whether the student is worthy and of how much. EC will also be offered if a book talk I think relates to the class comes up, which will be announced later in the semester when the history department posts its spring calendar of events/visiting scholars.

Electric Devices and Classroom Etiquette:

Technology: I recognize that all of you are adults, therefore laptops, tablets, and other gadgets are allowed in the classroom as long as they are used specifically for note taking and DO NOT distract other students. As the instructor of this class, if I feel that you are disrupting the peace of the classroom or hear complaints from other students, I reserve the right to take away your laptop/tablet privilege. To put it simply, please be responsible.

Cell phone use- including texting is absolutely NOT ALLOWED. Laptops and tablets are note taking devices, not cell phones. Phones must be put away at all times. If you have a job where you are on call, have it on vibrate in your pocket or speak to me.

FOOD and DRINK: Food and drink is permitted in the classroom. I realize that this class is late, so I will not deny anyone coffee or snacks. However, if you are eating something that a classmate is allergic to, you will be asked to step outside. Please also remember to clean up after yourself. If I notice trash accumulating on the floors and on the desks continuously, I have the right to take away food privileges.

Respect: Throughout the semester, we may touch upon a number of possibly controversial topics as well as pose questions that have multiple and possibly conflicting

answers. During discussion I encourage you to offer your opinion to the class and if challenged respond in a diplomatic way.

Sexual Harassment: Sexual harassment is a serious offense and if reported to the Dean of Student Affairs can result in expulsion. The classroom is a place where everyone should be able to learn in a comfortable and non-threatening environment. If a case of harassment does arise, a warning will be issued to the perpetrator. After the one warning, I will report that particular student to the Dean on Student Affairs.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: Plagiarism, which is “when one quotes or paraphrases somebody else’s words or ideas without crediting him or her” **is absolutely forbidden** at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. It is equivalent to lying, cheating, or stealing and is considered to be fraud and theft. Therefore make sure that every writing assignment is written in your own words, not someone else’s. The **UNCG Academic Integrity Policy** is online at <http://academicintegrity.uncg.edu>. I reserve the right to fail and press for disciplinary action against any student who has plagiarized on any assignment, no matter how minor. Please review the website carefully and please do not hesitate to ask questions if you are unclear as to what is considered plagiarism or what is not. **Plagiarism can result in expulsion.**

BLACKBOARD AND EMAIL: Besides documents and weekly reading/and or writing assignments, the class syllabus, announcements, study questions, as well as other class materials will be posted on blackboard so make sure you check it regularly. Also, make sure you have a working UNCG email so you can access Blackboard. I will also use your university email to contact you frequently throughout the semester, **so please make sure you have a working UNCG email.** If you cannot access blackboard or do not receive emails from me, alert me right away to remedy the problem.

NOTE – Due to the fact that I myself have a busy schedule, please allow up to 24 hours for me to respond to your email. If I have not responded within that time frame, please email me again to remind me or in case it got lost.

LATE PAPER POLICY: All written work must be turned in the day it is due. No emails are accepted UNLESS you are absent that day. Failure to hand in your assignment by 6:00pm (start of class) will result in a zero. Late papers are only accepted if given special permission by me with a legitimate excuse the day before the paper is due or other extreme circumstances. Communication is key. If you encounter a serious hardship during the course of the semester please do not hesitate to contact me.

OFFICE HOURS: My office hours are listed on the top of the syllabus but I am happy to do my best to accommodate your schedule if you cannot make it to my set hours. If you have any questions about the course content, assignments, feel uncomfortable, etc, I encourage you to come and talk to me. I am here to help! You just need to let me know! I am a person too! ☺

COURSE OUTLINE

Unit 1- Pre-Contact

Week One (1/14): Course Introduction: Syllabus Overview and a brief discussion on the following questions key to this class: What is Pre-Modern History? What is Pre-Columbian History? What is Pre-Contact history? What is History?

1/21: NO CLASS; Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. Day

“Our lives begin to end the day we remain silent about the things that matter”- MLK

Week 2 (1/28): Lecture: What is Ethnohistory? What is Anthropology? What is Archaeology? What is a primary source? What is a secondary source? How do you analyze sources? How do you write a history paper?

Required Reading: on Blackboard (BB) “Ethnohistory of Native America” pp. 11-24, by James Axtell, from *Rethinking American Indian history* ed. Donald Fixico (New Mexico, 1997); “ A Handful of a Adventurers: The Myth of Exceptional Men” pp. 1-27, from *Seven Myths of the Spanish Conquest*, Matthew Restall (2003).

Week 3 (2/4): Lecture: The Maya: From Origins, States, to Empire; Discussion of Maya “world view” (culture) and the “Fall” of the “Mayan Empire”

Brief film clip: *Apocalypto* sacrifice scene (*students speak to me before class if you would prefer not to view the film due to possibly disturbing content*)

Required Reading: BB Excerpts: “History and Maya Civilization” pp. 99-109, 120-152; and “Maya ideology and Religion: Rituals, Ceremonies and Sacrifice” pp. 745-754), from *The Ancient Maya*, ed. Robert J. Sharer and Loa P. Traxler, (Stanford University Press, 2006).

Week 4 (2/11): Lecture: Cahokia- Origins to Empire, Worldview, Collapse, & Conquest.

Brief Film Clip- *People of the Sun* (15 min)

<http://www.cahokiamounds.org/explore/video>

Required Reading: BB: “The Mother of Native North America” pp.1-10 and “Walking into Cahokia” pp.26-25, in *Cahokia* by Timothy R. Pauketat; Chapters 16&17 “Winter” and “Flight down the Mississippi” pp. 380-398 from *Knights of Spain, Warriors of the Sun*, Charles Hudson (1997).

Week 5 (2/18): Lecture: “Mother” Cultures of Mexico and Peru, Early cities in Meso-America & Peru during the “Classic Era & Post Classic Era”

Required Readings: BB: “Carved Stone & Monte Alban” pp. 334-339 & “Chavin de Hunter & Textiles” pp. 389-392 from *Images of the Past* ed. T. Douglas Price (McGraw Hill 2003); “How to Make an Almond” pp. 114-130, by Jared Diamond, from *Guns, Germs and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies*.

Recommended Reading: Martin & Wasserman- Preface, pp. 1-29 (chapter one)

Week 6 (2/25): The Rise of the Aztecs (Mexico); Mexica Culture, Religion, Government, Gender Roles, etc;

Required Readings: BB- “The Aztec Gods” p.144-147”, “Rituals Human Sacrifice” pp. 152-157”, and “Aztec Architecture” pp.225-224 (lots of picture’s, don’t worry ☺ in *Handbook to Life in the Aztec World* by Manual Aguilar-Moreno (2006).

Recommended Reading: Martin & Wasterman, chapter 2 pp. 31-40;

Week 7 (3/4) : The Rise of the Incas; Andean Culture, Religion, Government, Gender Roles, etc.; Midterm Review

Required Readings: BB “The Human Landscape” 9-41 in *Huarochiri: An Andean Society Under Inca and Spanish Rule*.

Recommended Readings: Martin & Wasserman, chapter 2 pp. 40-49;

ESSAY ONE DUE IN CLASS

Friday March 8th- Last Day to drop class without academic penalty

Spring Break: ☺ Saturday March 9th- Sunday March 17th
NO CLASS MONDAY MARCH 11

Week 8 (3/18): MIDTERM – Blue books!

Recommended Reading: Start reading *Malinzin’s Choices*

UNIT 2- CONTACT, FIRST ENCOUNTERS, & CONQUEST

Week 9 (3/25): LECTURE 1: The Spanish and Portuguese in The Age of Exploration; Columbus’ “Discovery of America”; First Impressions between Spanish & Aztecs

Required Readings: BB- “Christopher Columbus: Selected Entries from the Log August 3, 1492-March 15th, 1493”, from *Christopher Columbus and the Enterprise of the Indies*, ed. Symcox and Sullivan (2005) “Encounters” 79-80; “Bernard Diaz excerpt from “The True History of the Conquest of New Spain” 84-91; “Excerpt from Bernardino De Sahagun from the Florentine Codex” 91-99 in *Victors and Vanished* ed. Stuart B. Schwartz.

* Continue reading *Malinzin’s Choices*

Recommended Reading: Martin & Wasserman, chapter 2 pp. 52-63;

Friday March 29 - No Classes / Spring Holiday/ Good Friday/ Easter

Week 10 (4/1): LECTURE: The Conquest of the Aztecs: Discussion of *Malinzin’s Choices*.

Required Readings: BB: Excerpts “Cortes in Cholula” and “Cortes Describes Tenochtitlan” from *Hernan Cortez Letters from Mexico* ed. By Anthony Pagden; “Bernal Diaz in Cholula” and “Bernal Diaz in Mexico-Tenochtitlan” from *Bernal Diaz: The Conquest of New Spain*, translated by P.M. Cohen.

Finish Townsend’s *Malinzin’s Choices*.

Recommended Reading: Martin & Wasserman- pp. 69-74.

Week 11 (4/8): LECTURE: The Conquest of the Inca Empire; Impact of “Spiritual Conquest” and Spread of Catholicism.

Required Reading: BB: “Capture of an Inca King: Francisco Pizarro”

From *Narrative of the Conquest of Peru*, by his secretary, Francisco de Xeres, 1530-34; “Atahullpa Meets Francisco Pizarro” and “Atahullpa is executed by the Spaniards” in *An Inca Account of the Conquest of Peru* by Titu Cusi Yupanqui, translated by Ralph Bauer (2005).

Recommended Reading Martin & Wasserman pp. chapter 3, 75-88.

COLONIALISM & MEMORY

Week 12: (4/15): The Aftermath of Conquest: Colonial Society in Meso-American and Peru, Accommodation, Adaptation, Survival.

Required Reading: BB: Excerpts from “War” and “The Admiral Effects of the Baroque Image” from *Images at War: Mexico from Columbus to Blade Runner (1492-2019)* by Serge Gruzinski (Translated by Heather MacLean).

PRIMARY SOURCE ANALYSIS: ESSAY TWO DUE

Week 13: (4/22): Legacies of Cahokia, The Maya, the Aztecs, and Inca in today’s society. TBA

Week 14 (4/29): LAST CLASS: Review for Final Essay & Theme Wrap- Up ☺

4/30 Last Day of Classes; Reading days

FINAL EXAM (TAKE HOME) TBA