

History of Colonial Latin America

21:510:207

Section 01: Wednesday and Friday, 11:30-12:50

Section 62: Wednesday, 6:00-9:00

Instructor: Lance C. Thurner

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Office Hours: I have wide availability to speak with students about anything concerning the course. Please email and we will set up a time.

Course Description: This course surveys over three hundred years of Latin American history from Christopher Columbus's first voyage across the Atlantic Ocean through the 19th century wars of independence. We will examine pre-Columbian societies and how these adapted to and resisted European empires; we will evaluate how we interpret the conquest and why it matters; we will trace the development of racial ideas and how gender and sexual norms underwrote colonial social orders; we will track the growth of slavery and the African diaspora across the hemisphere; we will examine imperialism from the perspectives of indigenous peoples who never were conquered; and we will consider whether colonialism ever really ended in Latin America. More than a history of the Spanish and Portuguese empires, this course will provide students with a strong understanding of the colonization of the Americas as a whole.

This course includes a significant **collaborative, digital component:**

"Empire's Progeny: Race and Imperialism in the Americas"

At the dawn of European colonialism in the Western Hemisphere, race as we know it was not a thinkable concept. Over the course of the following three centuries notions of human difference went through many iterations and variations, out of which emerged the modern sense of race.

Throughout the semester, the class will collectively develop a web-based historical map/timeline that tracks the variations and changes in the ideas and experiences of race across time and space. Students will be provided a curated selection of primary and secondary sources. Individually and with partners, students will create short descriptions and analyses of these sources, catalog the sources, and locate them in time and space on the shared website. At the end of the semester, students will be prompted to select a subset of sources from this shared site to write a final paper on race and imperialism.

www.empireprogeny.org

This course is founded on student-led critical analysis of historical writing and sources. Students will learn how to evaluate conflicting historical narratives and assess why and how these narratives matter. Students will consider the value of different forms of

historical representation and perspective, such as history “from below,” micro-history, women’s history, global history, and biography. Students will learn how to interpret and evaluate a wide array of primary sources (including correspondence, writing, oral testimonies, legal documents, images, and maps) and practice using sources to elaborate or challenge narratives about the past. In addition to a strong understanding of the major problems in Colonial Latin American History, by the end of the semester students will have a strong introduction to historical thinking as an integral part of a liberal education and a way of approaching intellectual problems.

The **goals** of this course are to provide students with:

a scholarly familiarity with the region and the historical problems debated both within and outside of the academy in regards to Latin American history.

analytical skills for reading, interpreting and evaluating historical writing.

skills for writing longer papers consisting of complex, multi-step arguments; for expressing one’s ideas succinctly, clearly and convincingly; and for making and organizing evidence-based arguments.

analytical skills for using a historical approach to intellectual problems of many sorts.

(More on the learning objectives of this course can be found at <http://empiresprogeny.org/learning-outcomes/>)

Assignments:

Almost every week you will have an assignment due in this course. These include:

- Map Quiz (5 points)
- Two source assessment worksheets (5 points each)
- Two short essay rough drafts (graded as part of final draft) □
- Two short essay feedback worksheets (5 points each)
- Two short essay final drafts (15 points each)
- Final paper rough draft (graded as part of final draft) □
- Final paper feedback worksheet (5 points)
- Final paper final draft (25 points)
- Participation and Attendance (15 points)

□ *The grade for the final drafts includes consideration of the rough draft and the improvements made based on feedback.*

Grades will be assigned in accordance with the scale below. Since Rutgers University does not recognize minus grades and some plus grades, minus signs and some plus signs will be omitted from the final grades submitted for the course.

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|----|--------|----|-------|---|-------|
| A | 90-100 | C+ | 77-79 | D | 60-66 |
| B+ | 87-89 | C | 70-76 | F | 0-59 |
| B | 80-86 | D+ | 67-69 | | |

IMPORTANT: READ CAREFULLY

Weekly Pattern and Expectations: Each week will feature a new page on Canvas (available by the end of the day on Sunday) which will lead you to a recorded lecture, an online discussion, and an assignment. After reading the week's homepage, you should always begin with the lecture, which will include vital information for how to approach the readings and assignments.

Most weeks you will have the *option* to participate in an online discussion forum *or* attend a real-time class period (if you wish to join both, that is by-all-means welcome, but not expected). The real-time class period will be hosted via Zoom on Wednesdays at our normally allotted period – depending on your section, 11:30-12:50 or 6:00-7:20. Regardless of which section you are in, you may attend either. When we are working on collaborative projects, some weeks we will not have a real-time class period; this will be clearly announced beforehand.

It is not enough to show your face in the real-time class period. For both the discussion board and the real-time class, your participation grade will reflect your *contributions*. You should aim to speak up at least twice per week. As you can see above, participation is worth 15% of your grade, which is the difference between a B+ and a C.

All readings will be available on Canvas: there are no books to buy. My tacit contract with students is that I assign short but high-impact readings; therefore, I expect you to have the time to read these thoroughly and contemplate them in light of the week's theme before participating.

Assignments will vary regarding how much time they will require of you, so please review them at the beginning of the week rather than waiting until the day they are due. The assignments, lectures, discussions, and readings of this course are all closely integrated with one another and include considerable collaboration with classmates. Therefore, if you fall out of step with the class it will be difficult to catch up and this will negatively impact your grade. If, for whatever reason, you do fall behind, please email me ASAP and together we will find a way to get you back in sync.

Attendance: Weekly attendance and participation is required and will be recorded by the instructor. Recognized grounds for an excused absence are illness requiring medical attention, curricular or extracurricular activities approved by the faculty, personal obligations claimed by the student and recognized as valid, recognized religious holidays, and severe inclement weather causing dangerous traveling conditions. I do not require documentation, but please inform me if some condition prevents you from attending and participating. Any student who misses four weeks of class activities through any combination of excused and unexcused absences will not earn credit in this class. Such students should withdraw to avoid getting an F.

Plagiarism: As an academic community dedicated to the creation, dissemination, and application of knowledge, Rutgers University is committed to fostering an intellectual and ethical environment based on the principles of academic integrity. Academic integrity is essential to the success of the University's educational and research missions, and violations of academic integrity constitute serious offenses against the entire academic community. The entire Academic Integrity Policy can be found here: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-policy/>

You must include the following Rutgers Honor Code Pledge on all examinations and major course assignments submitted for grading: "On my honor, I have neither received nor given any unauthorized assistance on this examination (assignment). (Name) (Signature – typing your name is fine) (Date)".

Technology: This course should require only a web browser, a word processing program, and reliable internet access. Our collaborative project, Empire's Progeny, works best if accessed through a computer, although many students have also used phones and tablets. If for any reason you are unable to access the technology you need to participate in the course, please let me know ASAP and we will find a way to work around the issue.

For technical issues, also see

"Technology Resources for Students" <https://coronavirus.rutgers.edu/technology-resources-for-students/>

OIT-Newark Help Desk: <https://runit.rutgers.edu/hd/>

Rutgers University Newark (RU-N) is committed to the creation of an inclusive and safe learning environment for all students. RU-N has identified the following resources to further the mission of access and support:

- **Students with Disabilities:** Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. The Office of Disability Services (ODS) is responsible for the determination of appropriate accommodations for students who encounter barriers due to disability. In order

to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact ODS, register, have an initial appointment, and provide documentation. Once a student has completed the ODS process (registration, initial appointment, and documentation submitted) and reasonable accommodations are determined to be necessary and appropriate, a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) will be provided to the student. The student must give the LOA to each course instructor, followed by a discussion with the instructor. This should be completed as early in the semester as possible as accommodations are not retroactive. More information can be found at ods.rutgers.edu. Contact ODS: (973) 353-5375 or ods@newark.rutgers.edu.

- **Religious Holiday Policy and Accommodations:** Students are advised to provide timely notification to instructors about necessary absences for religious observances and are responsible for making up the work or exams according to an agreed-upon schedule. The Division of Student Affairs is available to verify absences for religious observance, as needed: (973) 353-5063 or DeanofStudents@newark.rutgers.edu.
- **Counseling Services:** Counseling Center Room 101, Blumenthal Hall, (973) 353-5805 or <http://counseling.newark.rutgers.edu/>.
- **Students with Temporary Conditions/Injuries:** Students experiencing a temporary condition or injury that is adversely affecting their ability to fully participate in their courses should submit a request for assistance at: <https://temporaryconditions.rutgers.edu>.
- **Students Who are Pregnant:** The Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance is available to assist students with any concerns or potential accommodations related to pregnancy: (973) 353-1906 or TitleIX@newark.rutgers.edu.
- **Gender or Sex-Based Discrimination or Harassment:** Students experiencing any form of gender or sex-based discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, relationship violence, or stalking, should know that help and support are available. To report an incident, contact the Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance: (973) 353-1906 or TitleIX@newark.rutgers.edu. To submit an incident report: tinyurl.com/RUNReportingForm. To speak with a staff member who is confidential and does NOT have a reporting responsibility, contact the Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance: (973) 353-1918 or run.vpva@rutgers.edu.

□ Learning Resources:

- Rutgers Learning Center (tutoring services)
Room 140, Bradley Hall
(973) 353-5608
<https://sasn.rutgers.edu/student-support/tutoring-academic-support/learning-center>
- Writing Center (tutoring and writing workshops)
Room 126, Conklin Hall
(973) 353-5847
nwc@rutgers.edu
<https://sasn.rutgers.edu/student-support/tutoring-academic-support/writing-center>

Week 1; Sept. 1 – 5: Introduction to the Course and the Study of the Past

Why study Latin American history? Where is Latin America? What is the purpose of studying the past anyway?

Friedrich Nietzsche, “On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life” (edited)

Week 2; Sept. 6 – 12: Beginning Empire’s Progeny

How do historians create knowledge about the past? How does this relate to oppression and inequality in the past?

Readings: All introductory materials for [Empire’s Progeny](#)

Podcast: How Race Was Made (28 min.)

<http://www.sceneonradio.org/episode-32-how-race-was-made-seeing-white-part-2/>

Recommended but not required: “Americans and Iberians on the Eve of Conquest”

Assignment: Map Quiz (See end of syllabus)

Week 3; Sept. 13 – 19: Conquest?

Who tells the history of the Conquest of the Americas and why does this matter?

Matthew Restall, “Apes and Men”

Pecha Maya Account of the Conquest, 1769

Pedro Cortés y Larraz, “Fugitive Indians,” 1760s

Assignment: Source 1 Worksheet

Week 4; Sept. 20 – 26: God, Race, and Gold

How was Catholicism related to the early Spanish empire?

Bartolomé de las Casas, “In Defense of Indians” (1553)

Hernan Ruiz de Alarcon, “Treatise on Heathen Superstitions” (1629)

The Lords and Holy Men of Tenochtitlan Reply to the Franciscans (1524)

Assignment: Essay 1 Rough Draft

Week 5; Sept. 27 – Oct. 3: Science, Writing, and the New Imperial Order

In what ways was knowledge a technology of imperialism?

Reading TBA

Assignment: Essay 1 Feedback Worksheet

Week 6; Oct. 4 – 10: Sugar and Plantation Slavery

How did someone become a slave? What did it mean to be a slave in the context of European imperialism? How did enslaved Africans survive plantation slavery?

Franklin Knight, “Slavery in the Americas,” 146-152

Stephanie Smallwood, *Saltwater Slavery* 33-36, 51-52, 58-61, 202-204
Assignment: Essay 1 Final Draft

Week 7; Oct. 11 – 17: Slavery, Knowledge, and Power

How did people of African descent reconstitute their cultures in the Americas? Why did colonial rulers see African culture as so threatening to their power and authority?

James Sweet, *Domingos Alvares, African Healing, and the Intellectual History of the Atlantic World* (excerpt)

Assignment: Source 2 Worksheet

Week 8; Oct. 18 – 24: Colonialism, Patriarchy, and Piety

How did women from different walks of life understand and make meaningful lives in the context of rigid colonial gender expectations? How did they negotiate the patriarchal institutions that governed their lives?

Memoir of Santa Rosa de Lima (1670s)

Sor Juana de la Cruz, Letter (1650)

Solange Alberro, “Biography of Beatrix de Padilla”

Assignment: Essay 2 Rough Draft

Week 9; Oct. 25 – 31: Sex, Gender, and the Order of Empire

What was the relationship between the oppression of women and the imperial institutions of racial domination?

Joanne Rappaport, *The Disappearing Mestizo*, 29-37, 42-49

Casta Paintings from Colonial Mexico, late 18th Century

Assignment: Essay 2 Feedback Worksheet

Week 10; Nov. 1 – 7: Labor, Space, and Indigeniety

How did the meaning of Indian-ness change as the Spanish empire aged? How did people of indigenous descent resist and/or accommodate indigeniety?

Lance Thurner, “Botanizing in the Borderlands” (2021) (edited)

Pedro Vicente Cañete y Domínguez, “Historical, Geographical, Physical, Political, Civil, and Legal Guide to the Government and Intendancy of the Province of Potosí” (1787)

Assignment: Essay 2 Final Draft

Week 11; Nov. 8 – 14: Modernization, Medicine, and Difference

Did science (and scientific medicine) come to Latin America from Europe? What is at stake in that question?

Martha Few, *For All of Humanity* (2015) (excerpt)

Pablo Gomez, *Experiential Caribbean* (2017) (excerpt)

No Assignment

Week 12; Nov. 15 – 21: Towards an Independent Latin America

What was/is the meaning of Latin American independence from the Spanish and Portuguese empires? What is “independence”?

Fernando Cardoso and Enzo Faletto, *Dependency and Development in Latin America*, 31-35

John Lynch, *The Spanish American Revolutions*, 1-2

Jaime Rodríguez, *The Independence of Spanish America*, 1-5

Haitian Declaration of Independence (1804)

Assignment: Final Paper Rough Draft

Week 13; Nov. 22 – 28: Thanksgiving and Final Paper

Assignment: Final Paper Feedback Worksheet

Week 14; Nov. 29 – Dec. 5: Imperialism, Slavery, and Freedom in the Caribbean

Reading TBA

No Assignment

Week 15; Dec 6 – 10: Review and Closing

Final Paper Due December 16

Map Quiz: During week 2 we will have a map quiz via Canvas. You will need to identify the following features on a map of Latin America:

Pre-Columbian Polities:

Inca Empire
Aztec Empire
Maya Civilization

Cities and Places:

Havana, Cuba
Puerto Rico
Hispanola (Island)
Haiti
Jamaica
Lima, Peru
Buenos Aires, Argentina
Quito, Ecuador
Potosí, Bolivia
Caracas, Venezuela
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
Salvador, Brazil
Mexico City
Guatemala City
St. Augustine, Florida
New Orleans

Natural Features:

Andes Mountains
Amazon River Basin
Mississippi River

You will also need to be able to identify these dates:

Columbus's First Journey 1492

Hernán Cortés defeats Tenochtitlán
(Mexico City)
1521

Collapse of Inca Empire
1533

Genesis of Plantation Slavery
1600-1700

Spanish American Independence
1810-1830

End of Slavery in Brazil 1888

End of Spanish Rule in Puerto Rico and
Cuba 1898