

Colonial Latin America

HIST 1300

HIST 1300 may be supplemented with an **optional** weekly one-credit CLAC course, taught by Professor Nora Bloem. CLAC poses historical questions, examines documents, and fosters discussions in the Spanish language. All are welcomed, even if only having limited Spanish fluency.

SPN (Spanish) 1900-401

remote broadcast on Microsoft Teams

Instructor:

Email:

TEXT: Peter Bakewell and Jacqueline Holler,

The History of Latin America to 1825, 3rd ed.

An unusually helpful companion website to our textbook may be accessed here:

<http://faculty.smu.edu/bakewell/>

And here is another wonderful companion website to a textbook on Brazil, *Brazil: Five Centuries of Change*, by Thomas Skidmore:

<https://library.brown.edu/create/fivecenturiesofchange/>

For best navigation of content, start here:

<https://library.brown.edu/create/fivecenturiesofchange/chapters/>

COURSE DESCRIPTION

History 1300 covers the history of Latin America from the cultures of pre-Columbian America to the voyages of Columbus and Cabral and, finally, to the independence movements of the early 19th century. Emphasis is placed on the interactions between Europeans, Africans, and Native Americans, and the imposition of European colonial institutions and culture on subject populations.

Learning Outcomes

Students will demonstrate substantive knowledge of the social, political, and economic history of Latin America from pre-Columbian times through the Colonial period. They will demonstrate a basic knowledge of historical chronology and geography and learn how to place historical data in

its cultural setting, assess primary documents, and use evidence to frame arguments and draw conclusions.

Writing assignments will give students practice in describing and interrogating significant early Latin American documents and assess how these sources reflect Latin American cultural traditions and also political and social institutions.

ASSIGNMENTS AND TESTS

List of Essay Tests and Papers

Current Assignments, with specifics, questions, prompts, and due dates will always be posted on the Canvas Announcements pages and on related course pages.

We will work towards seven graded assignments, which will include the following:

* primary sources papers: short personal response papers that address questions and themes surrounding historical documents (about 2.5 pages, or 500 words)

* exploration of themes within textbook chapters (or companion websites) (2.5 to 3 pages in length): see these helps <http://faculty.smu.edu/bakewell/BAKEWELL/thinksheet.html>

* a timeline exercise (consult the timeline found here: <http://faculty.smu.edu/bakewell/BAKEWELL/chronology.html>)

* one e-portfolio reflection paper (reflecting on the primary sources used in class) (1 page)

The reflection paper, if well written, will be worth 2 extra points; otherwise, 1 possible point.

Here is a list of suggested topics for the short personal response papers. The topics seem challenging but the reading will not be heavy. There is no need to overthink anything. What's counts is to make connections between the past (their past? your past?) and your present. Moving forward, I will post each assignment on Canvas with the specific questions, prompts, instructions, and due dates. Some of the following will call for the reading of primary sources, others appear in our textbook or in our online textbook resources:

1. Reading and Navigating an Aztec Codex: the wandering from legendary Aztlan to founding the capital of Tenochtitlan.
2. Describing the City and her Market: Documents of Cortez, Bernal Díaz, and Nahuatl informants and the painted representations of the Mexican Muralists
3. City and Empire in Peru: Capital, Roads, Economy (we will consult a website)

4. Permanence and Impermanence in Aztec Poetry and Thought (the poem on the City; the poems on impermanence; reading the “Aztec Calendar” and its eras). The idea of impermanence recalls the Japanese Buddhist aesthetic.
5. The Crossing: Slave Trade and the Economic Foundations of Brazil
6. At the heart of systemic racism: The Construction of Castes in Art and Word
7. The Jamaica Letter: How does Bolivar connect the past with the present to make his case? In what way is his dream of a great Columbian nation, the creation of a great American Capital?
8. Reading Glyphs and Knots and Alphabets as a way of ordering the universe and building the universal American Capital: Can you read a Mayan Glyph?
9. Malinche (Malintzin, Marina), La Virgen de Guadalupe (Tonantzin), and la Perrichola: Naming Latin American Women
10. Law and Outlaw in an oppressive colonial society: What do we say about Pirates?

We won't try to write on all of the topics listed above, but taken as a whole, these sketch out a thematic and semiotic outline for the semester.

How to complete the Signature Assignment, that is, the Documentary Sources Papers

Students write short papers, or personal response essays, that respond to primary documents as part of the required college signature assignment. These signature papers are posted on eportfolio. Any assigned paper should be about 2.5 to 3 pages in length, written outside of class and sent as an email attachment by a clear due date. These essays specifically address primary sources (letters, speeches, journals, original accounts of explorations, and the like). You may be asked to read several primary sources and then discuss ideas, word choices, and rhetoric found in these (translated) documents. Such discussion will also look at how the author presents or paints a scenario or argues a case. You will also submit a one-page reflection paper, the last day of classes, summarizing what you have learned from working with primary historical documents.

Because such essays focus on primary sources, their wording, purpose, and arguments, students do not need to use—shouldn't use—secondary or online sources to address the historical setting. Should you consider it necessary to include more than a sentence or two placing the primary document in its historical setting, you will then include an apparatus of footnotes along with a photocopy of any secondary source cited. On the copy, you will mark with a highlighter all words and phrases consulted or quoted. I will not grade any essays in which there is more than a paragraph giving historical background, whether footnoted or not. Unsourced submissions are marked as plagiarized papers, and any instance of plagiarism can shrink a final class grade by at least two letter grades.

No essays or class work of any kind may be submitted after the date scheduled for the final exam. That date marks the close of everything pertaining to this class.

I grade all essays on the following three criteria: substantive content (facts, dates = 33%), critical thinking skills (how you reason, connect the past to the present, or show contrast and difference = 34%), and communication (how you order, arrange, or link your ideas, and the tone and texture, the color, of the paper = 33%).

Format (Communication)

One-and-a-half line spacing, 12 or 14 point, Times New Roman or Baskerville typeface.

Style and Grammar (Communication)

All of us struggle with writing clearly in the kind of standard American English found in college textbooks and other assigned reading material. But all can improve their skills with each passing semester. Improvement requires more than an English class; it requires effort and careful thought.

Here are a few short books for the desks of American writers: William Zinsser, *On Writing Well*; Jacques Barzun, *Simple & Direct*; Francis-Noel Thomas and Mark Turner, *Clear and Simple as the Truth: Writing Classic Prose*; Joseph M. Williams, *Style: Toward Clarity and Grace*. Another (British) classic is Robert Graves's and Alan Hodges's *Reader over Your Shoulder*.

Many students come to English as a second or even a third language. Do use spellcheck and other helps but don't give up. Grades are not based on grammar or spelling, but on content, thought, clarity. Consider purchasing an inexpensive copy of Zinsser's book, *On Writing Well*, for our class. Use it on every assignment and let me know how you are using this book and how it helps you express your ideas with greater force and clarity. Zinsser is the only book on writing that you will need for the first four years of college. After that, buy an inexpensive copy of Jacques Barzun's *Simple & Direct*.

GRADE SCALE

Assignments, papers, and essays will all be tallied at equal value, and will be graded according to the following scale, a standard French scale. This famous, flexible, and highly useful grade scale allows for fairness and equity, and for extra points, but don't expect perfection. A 14 is a solid A, though some students reach an 17.5, which yields 3.5 extra points that can be applied to another (lower) test or paper grade, at any time. The lowest score of the semester may be dropped, if so requested.

- 20 Perfection
- 19
- 18
- 17.5 Most Excellent A+
- 17 Excellent A+
- 16 A+
- 15 A
- 14 A
- 13 A-
- 12 Good B+
- 11 B
- 10 B-
- 9 Fair C+
- 8 Sufficient C
- 7 Sufficient C-
- 6 Insufficient D+
- 5 Insufficient D
- 4 Poor E

CLASS SCHEDULE AND CALENDAR

A thematic thread that runs through the semester has to do with the founding of capital cities as centers of learning, culture, religion, government, and business. In what ways are the great pre-Columbian capitals and the Viceregal Capitals alike? Bolívar dreamed of a great Panamerican capital in Panama, and shaped a “Great Columbia.” Are the great capitals of Latin America always associated with authoritarian rule?

Indigenous Languages, Cultures, Empires

Week One:

American Peoples, Cultures, and Languages

Guest and Explanation of CLAC and related course offerings in Nahuatl and Quechua, languages of empire.

Week Two:

Mesoamerica and Mexico

Short video, “When a language dies” . . . Nahuatl and the Semiotics of Language and Culture

Language Gulper Website: Native America, North, Central, South, mapped by language family, typology, history

The Olmec: Monuments, Script, Religious Symbolism and the Natural World

The Maya: Geography; Decipherment and Nature of the mixed, logographic or hieroglyphic script: the Mayan Glyphs

Textbook Readings: Chapter Two

Week Three:

The Mexica (or Aztecs): Poetry of Nezahualcoyotl (Fasting Coyote): Religious Symbolism and Ceremonial Performance

Discussion Questions (Discussion Questions for class sessions will be posted on CANVAS):

What do we know about the past? What can we know? Do the extant records, however early, reveal or distort?

Does the Aztec record come to us directly (genuine and pure)? or through the distorting lens of the Spanish conquerors?

Can we directly touch an ancient or traditional civilization? or must we create models to help us discover the past? If we don't have an insider's view (the -emic view), can we still be detectives unraveling clues about the past?

The Urban Culture of Mesoamerica: City as Artistic Masterpiece and Center of the Universe

Case Studies: Tenochtitlan (Mexico); El Mirador and Mayan Cities; Incan Cusco

Week Four:

Discussion Questions: What do we know? Do early records help?

Case Study: The Popol Vuh, or the chance survival of a cosmogony: a semiotic universe, banned and burned by the Conquerors, survives by merest accident.

Film: Popol Vuh: The Creation Myth of the Maya (Patricia Amlin)

The Inca Empire

Conquest

Week Five:

Conquest: Spain and Portugal moving out across the Oceans

Cabral: A Second Columbus

What can we know: What were Columbus's true origins and motives? Was he Jewish? or is that claim another false lead?

What can we know: Was Cabral's "discovery" of Brazil an accident of tide and current or a secret mission?

How do the First Spanish and Portuguese settlements, and ambitions, compare?

Chapter 4

The First Conquest: Cortes and the Mexica

Is the writer telling the truth? Case Study on motives in creating a document: The Letters of Cortes to Emperor Charles V—and other accounts of the Conquest of Mexico

Week Six:

The First Conquest: Cortez and the Mexica (continued)

Chapter 5

The Second Conquest: Pizarro and the Inca

Chapter 5

Week Seven:

The Second Conquest: Pizarro and the Inca (continued)

The Feud: The Pizarro Brothers v. the Almagro Faction

Chapter 5

The Conquest on the Peripheries: Exploring the Amazon; Colombian Wanderings; Chile

Chapter 6

Week Eight:

The Conquistadors on the Take: Land and Labor (encomienda system, mita, mines)

Chapter Seven

The Empire Strikes Back (and Reins Them In): The Creation of Viceroyalties under the Council of the Indies

Will the Imperial Native Legacies Survive? Case Study: El Inca Garcilaso

Vilcabamba: Inca Rule Lives On

Colonial Latin America

Week Nine:

Colonial Institutions: How the Viceroyalties Worked

Colonial Shipping and Piracy

Chapter Eight

Week Ten:

Colonial Institutions (continued)

Colonial Religion: Church Organization; Inquisition, Nuns

Case Studies in Religious Syncretism: Juan Diego and the Virgen of Guadalupe; Reverencing Mountains in Peru: Andean Cosmologies and Syncretism

Week Eleven:

Colonial Music, Dance, Theatre, Clothing

The “tapadas”: How colonial Peruvian women used fashion as a statement of freedom in the face of sharp institutional criticism.

Chapter 9

Week Twelve:

Brazil: Economy and Slavery;

Institutions of Rule;

Kicking out the competition (French, Dutch)

Week Thirteen:

At the heart of centuries of systemic racism: Castes in Colonial Latin America (including California)

Pirates of the Caribbean: Law and Outlaw in a closed, oppressive economic system

The Bourbon Reforms: Reform or Oppression?

Chapter 10

Independence

Week Fourteen:

The Onset of the Wars for Independence

Chapter 12

Week Fifteen:

The Liberators and their Dreams and Plans

Week Sixteen:

The Wars for Independence

Chapter 13

Week 17:

Final Exam