HIS 346K: Colonial Latin America

Term: Self-Paced

COURSE DESCRIPTION

When Iberians (Spanish and Portuguese) and Africans set foot in the Americas in the late 15th century, indigenous societies—some of them enormous and powerful empires—had already occupied for thousands of years the territory now known as “Latin America.” The sudden arrival of Iberians and Africans from across the Atlantic Ocean would irrevocably change the course of that territory’s history.

Spanning from the 15th century until many regions declared independence from Spain and Portugal in the early 19th century, this course seeks to help you answer the following questions:

- How and why did Iberians manage to conquer many indigenous societies?
- How successful were these conquests?
- What kinds of changes occurred in Latin American societies as a result of conquest and, subsequently, colonization?
- What was life like for indigenous peoples and Africans under colonial rule?
- What kinds of divides existed within colonial society, and how did these rifts contribute to tensions that would ultimately lead to imperial crisis and independence in the late 18th and early 19th centuries?

The above questions are numerous, but a single question binds them altogether and provides the backbone of this course’s content: Who had power/authority in colonial Latin America, and what did power/authority mean in this context? In other words, who got to make the decisions that determined the course of history? You may find that the answer to this question varies considerably depending on the region, peoples involved, and numerous other factors.

This course is fully self-paced. An instructor is available via email to answer questions and provide guidance. Students have five months upon registration in which to complete all coursework, with an additional 30 days allotted for completion of the final exam.

PREREQUISITES

Upper-division standing.

Students should contact the University Extension advisor with any questions about prerequisites or placement in our courses. All students should contact their academic advisor with any questions about how this course fulfills their degree requirements.

UT AUSTIN FLAG CREDIT

This course carries the Global Cultures flag. Global Cultures courses are designed to increase your familiarity with cultural groups outside the United States. You should, therefore, expect a
substantial portion of your grade to come from assignments covering the practices, beliefs, and histories of at least one non-U.S. cultural group, past or present.

**COURSE OUTLINE**

The lessons for this course are partly chronological, and partly thematic. Generally speaking, they follow a chronology that begins in the 15th century and ends in the early 19th century. However, the lessons occasionally jump back and forth in time in order to allow for a thorough discussion of a particular theme. This is particularly the case for lessons 5 through 8, which are more thematic than chronological.

1. Iberia, Africa, and Early Exploration of the Americas
2. Latin America’s Indigenous Peoples Before the Conquest
3. The Iberian Conquest of Latin America, Part I: Empires Fall
4. The Iberian Conquest of Latin America, Part II: The Long Conquest
5. Colonial Administration, Labor and Economy
6. The Church

   —*Midterm Exam*—

7. Race, Caste and Social Hierarchy
8. Daily Life in the Colonies
9. The Bourbon and Pombaline Reforms
10. Crisis and Rebellion
11. Independence

   —*Final Exam*—

**MATERIALS**

You will need to acquire the following textbooks:


   OR (either edition is acceptable)

5. XANEDU Online Course Pack

Recommended Additional Texts

This is NOT a required text; however, you may find it a helpful guide for writing your essays:

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

Here are some tips that may help you succeed and get the most out of this course:

- **Read the assignment instructions and lesson overviews carefully.** All of the instructions and overviews are designed to provide you with all of the information you need to understand not only how to do each assignment, but also how to do well on it.

- **Read the Course Home section on Assignments.** The purpose of these instructions is to ensure that you know exactly what you need to do for your assignments. If you aren’t happy with an assignment grade, don’t give up—go back to these instructions and re-read them to find out how you can do better on the next assignment.

- **Be patient.** It will probably take some practice to learn to meet the standards laid out in the instructions, especially if you have limited experience with writing essays or acquiring information through reading. There are many assignments for this class, which means you have plenty of opportunities to improve. Aim to improve a little bit with each lesson.

- **Plan carefully and be realistic about timing.** Once you’ve completed the first lesson or two, you’ll have some idea of how long it takes you to do the reading and assignments for each lesson. Use that information to map out a realistic work plan for yourself, to ensure that you finish the course on time.

- **Develop a routine.** Other parts of your life may have strict deadlines; for the most part, this course does not. You may find that, if you simply work on this class “when you have time,” you won’t actually work on it at all. To avoid this problem, try blocking out specific times on your calendar each week to work on this course. Do what you need to do to stick to the plan. If it’s not working, try changing location, or changing the time blocks, or using a more flexible work plan—whatever will help you to make regular, steady progress.

- **Read strategically.** Rather than trying to take in every detail, try focusing on the most important parts of the readings: a) the main point (or points) the author wants to make
in any given chapter or section, and b) the information needed for completing your assignments. This doesn’t mean you should completely ignore everything else; this is a technique for strategic focusing, not for avoiding half of the assigned readings.

- It may also help to begin each lesson by doing the assigned readings from the Restall and Lane textbook, since this text is relatively concise and engaging—it usually focuses on making an interesting argument rather than providing lots of detail. Then, move on to the Burkholder and Johnson book, which will help fill in some of the detail regarding what you learned in Restall and Lane. You will often find that you need some of this extra detail from Burkholder and Johnson in order to complete your assignments. Finally, “zoom in” on a particular topic or theme by doing the additional readings from the Mills and Taylor book or other assigned readings.

- **Focus on the big questions.** If you have trouble deciding which parts of the readings to focus on and which information is most relevant for completing your assignments, review the questions posed in the Introduction for this class. You may also find it helpful to review the lesson’s Learning Objectives, Overview, or the primary question posed for the assignment you’re working on. Power and authority are the primary recurring themes of this course. If you feel start to feel overwhelmed by details and minutiae, consider how you can relate your current reading and writing assignments back to these themes.

- **Review the following websites**, which describe how to think historically, and consider how you can apply these methods to your assignments for this course:

  http://wcm1.web.rice.edu/historical-thinking-rubric.html (Links to an external site.)


- **Review the maps on Canvas.** You should take a look at these maps before beginning the lessons, and return to them as needed while you work through the lessons and assignments. Please also pay close attention to the maps in the readings. It is often helpful to be able to envision where historical events occurred in relation to one another—especially courses that cover an extensive geographical territory, as this one does.

**GETTING HELP**

This course allows you to work at your own pace and in any setting you choose. The freedom of a self-paced course, however, means that more responsibility will fall upon you to manage your time and let others know when you need assistance.

To contact your instructor with any questions about the course content or assignments, use the Canvas inbox to send a direct message. You can expect to receive a response within two
business days. You can learn more about your instructor on the About Your Instructor page within the course overview.

Technical issues and questions regarding exam logistics, obtaining a transcript, or your enrollment in general should be directed to University Extension at 512.471.2900 or uex@austin.utexas.edu.

ASSIGNMENTS

Length: With the exception of the Identification questions, the instructions for each written assignment include a maximum and minimum length. Please pay close attention to these word/page count instructions, as they are designed with the assignment content in mind. If you fall under the word/page count, then you’re probably missing some content, analysis or explanation. If you go well over it, then you are probably including too much detail or writing in an imprecise manner.

Many of the writing assignments for this course include multiple questions, especially in the earlier lessons. Often, there will be one primary question, with a series of sub-questions that you are required to include as part of your answer. The primary question will appear in **bold**.

*You should focus your whole assignment on answering the primary question.* Think of the sub-questions as guidelines to help you answer the primary question; addressing each of these questions will help to ensure that your overall answer is thorough and complete. Failing to provide a complete answer to any of the sub-questions will generally result in a lower grade.

If the large number of questions feels overwhelming and you’re unsure how to address them all, try one of the following strategies:

- **Answer the questions in order, using them to structure your assignment.** Think of your answers to the sub-questions as points that support your answer to the primary question. For instance, for an essay question, you might devote one paragraph (or perhaps two) to answering each of the sub-questions. Start by answering the first sub-question; then move on to the second one, and so on. Then look back over your work: does an answer to the primary question emerge from what you’ve written? That answer will serve as your main argument, which you should state clearly near the beginning of your assignment. (Make sure to then go back over your answers to the sub-questions to update them and remove any extraneous information that’s not relevant to your overall argument. Your ideas may have changed over the course of these steps!)

OR:

- **Let the answers to the sub-questions emerge in bits and pieces over the course of your assignment.** Perhaps strategy #1 feels too constricting to you, because the points you want to make don’t fit neatly within the assignment’s sub-questions. This may especially be the case for Essay assignments, whose broad scope can often be addressed in numerous ways. **You must provide complete answers to every single primary question and sub-question,** but how you do so is up to you. Perhaps you prefer to answer the third sub-question before the first one; or, perhaps you would like to make a different
point entirely, but use your answers to the questions as evidence to support your points. This is absolutely acceptable, so long as you answer every question, and so long as your answer is clear, understandable, and grounded in solid evidence from the readings.

Assignments: Reflection

The Reflection assignments are brief, informal, low-stakes opportunities for you to engage with the readings, voice your opinions, and develop skills (with writing, critical thinking, creativity, and more) that will help you with other components of the course. This is also a great opportunity to practice backing up your opinions with solid evidence, so you will need to use footnotes to show where you got your information. Otherwise, Reflection assignments give you a fair bit of freedom to express yourself and practice new ways of thinking about the material. If you like, feel free to use informal language for these assignments.

Instructions for completing Reflection assignments:

- Answer the question, using specific examples from the readings, and—if applicable—your own experiences.
- Use Chicago style footnotes to show where you got your information. (See the Citations section for instructions on how to do this.)
- Your answer will be graded based on the following factors:
  - Did you provide a complete answer to every part of the question?
  - Did you use specific examples from the readings, backed up with properly-formatted footnotes?
  - Was your answer clear, understandable, and thoroughly explained?
  - Was your answer thoughtful and stated in your own words? (In other words, did you analyze and reformulate what you learned, rather than simply copying from the readings? Did you express your own opinion?)

Rubric for Reflection Assignments

An “A” Reflection assignment will:

- Provide a complete answer to every part of the question.
- Be clearly written and understandable.
- Include footnotes to show where you got all your evidence.
- Provide complete explanations for your ideas.
- Clearly connect your evidence to the point(s) you want to make.
- Show clearly that you analyzed and reformulated what you learned, rather than simply copying from the readings.
- Show clearly that you put significant thought into formulating your own, original opinions.
A “B” Reflection assignment will:

- Demonstrate most of the above characteristics, but fall short in one or two areas. For instance, a “B” assignment might:
  - Include some footnotes, but not for all your evidence.
  - Demonstrate some spelling and grammar issues that make it a bit difficult to follow.
  - Provide incomplete explanations for your ideas, or for how your evidence supports your point.
  - Demonstrate some original thought and analysis, but needs to be developed further, either to clarify your meaning or to move beyond the interpretations/analyses found in the readings. (Perhaps you didn’t do enough to reformulate what you read into an original analysis of your own, or your argument isn’t easily understandable.)

A “C” Reflection assignment will:

- Demonstrate only a few of the characteristics of an “A” assignment, OR
- Fall severely short in one area in a way that heavily impacts the quality of your answer. For instance, a C assignment might:
  - Provide a severely incomplete answer to the question(s).
  - Demonstrate limited original thought/analysis.
  - Have poor writing that makes it very difficult to understand.
  - Use insufficient evidence from the readings.
  - Include no footnotes.
  - Fall well short of the word limit.

A “D” Reflection assignment will:

- Exhibit almost none of the characteristics listed for the “A” range; OR
- Fall severely short in areas that are absolutely critical for the assignment at hand. For instance, a “D” essay might:
  - Provide a highly inconclusive or incomplete answer the question(s).
  - Demonstrate almost no original thought/analysis.
  - Fall extremely short of the word limit.
  - Use almost no evidence from the readings.

An “F” assignment will exhibit none of the assignment requirements, or fall severely short in a way that prevented you from actually completing the assignment (for instance, perhaps you
Assignments: Identification

Identification assignments require you to briefly define a series of terms, and explain their significance for the historical moment and/or the themes of the course. They are designed in part to ensure that you understand the material for each lesson, but also to provide an opportunity to practice two skills: 1) synthesizing information (condensing what you have learned about the term and its significance into a brief explanation in your own words); and 2) placing specific people/events/ideas within their broader historical context.

You may find that completing Identification assignments helps you with your Short Answer and Essay assignments. They should also prove helpful when studying for exams; glancing over your Identification answers for each of your lessons should give you a general idea of some of the themes and important facts to know for each lesson.

Instructions for completing Identification assignments:

• Identify/define each of the terms provided, and explain their significance.
• For each term, you need to provide a two-part answer. First, define the term/explain what it means. Then, explain why it matters (Why learn about this term? How does it relate to the broader themes of the class, or to other facets of this lesson? What do we learn about by understanding this term?)
• Imagine you are explaining each term to someone who has no familiarity with Latin American history. What would they need to know in order to understand what the term means? What would they need to know in order to understand why we’re learning about it in this class?
• Use your own words, and be as clear as possible. Don’t just copy from the readings!
• Make sure to include any relevant dates, names, historical events, etc. in your answer (and don’t forget to explain their meaning, if necessary!).
• There is no word requirement for identification assignments, but you will probably want to aim for around 100-200 words for each identification. This assignment is designed in part to encourage you to explain historical concepts in a concise manner, so if you’ve devoted an entire page to a single term, then you’re missing the point! On the other hand, leaving out information that is critical for understanding the term and its significance could negatively impact your grade.
• Once again, make sure to use Chicago-style footnotes to show where you found your information.

As an example, here is one way you might identify and state the significance of the term “Mesoamerica.” See if you can identify which parts count as “identifying” and which as “stating the significance.” Some terms will need more of the former, while others need more of the latter. Additionally, notice the placement of footnotes. What do these footnotes tell you, and why are they placed where they are?
**Mesoamerica** is a vast and diverse geographical area that includes most of Mexico and Central America. Although multiple different political groups occupied the area before the Conquest, its various peoples shared a number of cultural traditions. For example, the people of Mesoamerica tended to have similar polytheistic religions, individuals who acted as both political and religious rulers, and many waged war in order to obtain sacrificial victims.[1] Many Mesoamerican cities had monumental architecture, and its peoples’ worldview was defined by two principles: duality and the cardinal directions.[2] Some of pre-contact Latin America’s largest and most sophisticated civilizations lived in this region, including the Olmecs, the Maya, and the Aztecs.[3]

**Rubric for Identification Questions**

Each answer is worth five points: 2.5 for a correct and complete definition, and 2.5 for a correct and complete explanation of its significance.

To get the full 2.5 points for the *definition*, you must:

- Clearly indicate which period, region, social/ethnic group, etc. the term pertains to.
- Provide sufficient detail, without missing anything from the readings that is important for understanding who/what the term refers to.
- Leave out extraneous information that does not help to explain the term’s meaning and/or place in history.
- Use your own words, rather than copying from the textbook.
- Provide a clear and understandable explanation of the term’s meaning and place in history. (That means poor spelling/grammar can negatively impact your grade!)
- Include Chicago-style footnotes to show where you got your information.

To get the full 2.5 points for the *significance*, you must:

- Provide sufficient detail, without missing anything from the readings that is important for understanding why the term is important for understanding this particular period/social group/region, etc.
- Provide a clear and understandable explanation of the term’s significance. (Again, this means poor writing can affect your grade.)
- Use your own words, rather than copying from the textbook.
- Show clearly how the term fits into the broader themes of the course/colonial Latin American history.
  - Your answer should make clear how and why the term is worth including in this lesson, and worth learning about in a course on Latin American history. You don’t necessarily need to say “this is important because...” in order to accomplish this.
  - Take a look at the above example, which states the definition and significance of the “Mesoamerica.” The final sentence indicates the broader significance of the term: it suggests that the peoples who lived in the region are critical to
understanding pre-contact Latin America because they had some of the largest and most sophisticated civilizations. (Note, however, that many of the terms for the course will require more than one sentence to fully explain their significance!)

**Assignments: Short Answer**

You will only complete short answer questions for the first two lessons of the course. They are designed to provide you with an opportunity to practice answering a question by synthesizing information from the readings—a skill you will need in order to complete the Essay assignments later on in the course.

Instructions for completing Short Answer assignments:

- As in the identification questions, you will want to explain as if your audience knows nothing about Latin American history. What would they need to know in order to understand your answer?
- Use Chicago-style footnotes to show where you got your information.
- You will be graded based on the following factors:
  - Did you provide a complete answer to every part of the question?
  - Did you use specific examples from the readings, backed up with properly-formatted footnotes?
  - Did you base your answer on thorough evidence from the readings?
  - Was your answer clear, understandable, and thoroughly explained?
  - Was your answer thoughtful and stated in your own words? (In other words, did you analyze and reformulate what you learned, rather than simply copying from the readings?)

**Rubric for Short Answer Questions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>An “A” answer will meet all of the requirements listed above.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>A “B” answer will meet most of them, but fall a bit short in one or two areas (for instance, perhaps your answer to one part of the question was a bit incomplete, or it lacked some explanation).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>A “C” answer will fall short in multiple areas, or fall severely short in one area in a way that heavily impacts the quality of your answer (for instance, perhaps it’s too difficult to understand, far too short, or uses insufficient evidence from the readings).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>A “D” answer will exhibit very few of the assignment requirements, or fall well short of answering the question.</td>
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Assignments: Essay

Essay assignments will require you to do much more than regurgitate information from the readings: you will need to take what you have learned; decide which parts are relevant to answering a particular question; reorder the information into a cohesive argument; and relay that information in clear and concise prose. These are the most difficult assignments for the course, but they are also the most useful. Reordering information into an essay format not only helps you learn the material—it also helps you build analytical and communication skills that are essential for any college graduate.

For each and every essay you write for this course, make sure your essay complies with the following content and writing guidelines:

**Essay Content Guidelines**

- **Your paper needs to have a thesis**—an argument of your own creation that a clear statement regarding the topic of the essay. The first few Essay assignments provide a question that you need to answer. In most cases, your thesis should provide an answer to this question.
- **Devote your whole essay to proving your thesis.** The point of these essays is not to show that you know a lot about the subject, or the book. The point is to prove your point!
- **A good thesis statement will:**
  1. Clearly identify your topic.
  2. Make a specific claim about that topic.
  3. Indicate why that claim is persuasive.
  4. Make an argument that can be effectively discussed and proven in the scope of this essay. (In other words, avoid broad thesis statements like “colonialism has had a marked effect on numerous societies over the course of history.” This can’t possibly be proven in a 3-5 page essay!)
  5. Answer the question posed in the instructions (if applicable).
  6. Demonstrate clear relevance to the subject of the lesson.
- **Make sure to address every part of the instructions.** Earlier essay assignments provide quite a lot of specifications regarding what you should include in your essay. Make sure to follow these specifications closely—they indicate what kinds of information a good essay should include, so missing any of the instructions will negatively impact your grade.
- **To prove your points, use plenty of evidence** from the assigned readings. Evidence might include a direct quote, a historical fact, or just about anything else you learn from the readings. Generally speaking, an essay of this length should include at least five footnotes. However, you may need many more—you should insert however many footnotes are necessary to show where all of your evidence comes from.
• It’s often (though not always) **better to paraphrase than to quote directly**; putting material into your own words shows that you’ve analyzed it yourself, and makes it easier to show readers the main point(s) you want us to understand.

• **Explain your thinking fully.** You need to not only provide information, but also analyze what that information means. What does your evidence illustrate, and how does it support the point you want to make? Often, a complete explanation not only states what happened, but also provides some insight into how and why it happened, or why you’ve chosen to make a certain argument.

Here’s an example from a US history class. This is an incomplete explanation of how the Chesapeake colonies’ economy developed in the 17th century:

"The Chesapeake colonies depended mostly on the production of staple crops, especially tobacco. Indentured servitude was a very common form of labor."

Here’s a more complete explanation:

"The economy of the Chesapeake colonies depended mostly on the production of staple crops, especially tobacco. Because tobacco was very labor-intensive, Chesapeake colonists came to rely much more heavily on indentured servants (and, later, slaves) than did northern colonists."

While the first answer merely states the features of the Chesapeake economy, the second one explains that one of these features led to the other, and it explains why that was. With only an extra half-sentence, it tells us not only that slavery was more common in the Chesapeake than in other regions, but also why.

As with the Reflection and Short Answer questions, explain as if your audience knows nothing about Latin American history. What would they need to know in order to understand your point?

**Essay Writing Guidelines**

Your essay must follow a **standard essay structure**. If you aren’t sure what this means, please consult this link (move through the headings on the right side of the page: “Overview of the Academic Essay,” “Essay Structure,” “Developing a Thesis,” and on): [http://writingcenter.fas.harvard.edu/pages/overview-academic-essay](http://writingcenter.fas.harvard.edu/pages/overview-academic-essay) (Links to an external site.).

• A standard essay should include the following components:

  1. **An introduction**, which introduces the subject matter of your paper and states your thesis. It’s usually best to also include a sort of "road map" of the rest of your essay—just a couple of sentences stating what points your essay will make that help prove your thesis.
  2. **A middle section** that proves your thesis. You should have multiple points which, taken together, prove your thesis; try to devote one paragraph (or sometimes two)
to each point. Each of these paragraphs should contribute to your overall argument by presenting evidence and explaining how that evidence proves your point.

3. A conclusion, which restates your thesis and the main points you've made. Compelling conclusions can also include a question (or questions) that merits further investigation for your essay’s topic.

- **You may use the first person (“I,” “my,” etc.) if you wish.** Note, however, that first-person statements (“I think,” “I suspect,” “I argue,” etc.) generally pertain to your own thoughts, rather than evidence from the readings. Therefore, overusing first-person statements can sometimes lead to essays filled with unsubstantiated claims. You are welcome to use the first person, but please make sure you are providing sufficient evidence to back up your ideas.
- **Begin each paragraph with a topic sentence,** which states the point you intend to make with your paragraph. Then, spend the rest of your paragraph explaining your point and providing evidence to back it up. Here’s a sample paragraph with the topic sentence underlined:

Topic sentences are critical components of a good essay. These sentences state the main idea the author hopes to communicate with each paragraph. As Mark Connelly states, a topic sentence plays multiple key roles: it tells readers what the paragraph is about, makes a statement supported by the rest of the paragraph, and can also introduce new ideas.[1] By briefly summing up the point of each paragraph, topic sentences essentially act as sign posts, guiding the reader through the author’s thoughts in a clear, organized way. As a result, well-written topic sentences can make an essay significantly easier to read and understand.

**Tip:** If a reader can get the gist of your argument just by reading the first sentence or two of each paragraph, then you probably have great topic sentences!

**Essay Assignment Rubric**

An essay in the “A” range will:

- Have a clear thesis and a clear, easy-to-follow essay structure.
- Be clearly written and easily understandable.
- Provide complete answers to every part of the question.
- Base those answers on plenty of solid evidence from the readings.
- Provide evidence that is as thorough and complete as possible given the resources provided (in other words, you made sure to include all the evidence from the readings that really obviously supports your points, and that is obviously well-suited to the topic at hand).
- Link the evidence clearly to the points you want to make (in other words, it not only provides evidence, but also clearly explains how/why that evidence proves your point).
- Include complete explanations of historical personages, events, etc., such that someone with no familiarity with the subject would understand the entire essay.
- Remain within the assigned page limit.
• Show clear evidence that you *analyzed* and *reformulated* what you learned from the readings, rather than simply copying from the book. (In other words, you frequently paraphrased instead of quoting directly, and you provided your own interpretations rather than merely mimicking those in the readings.)
• Utilize Chicago-style footnotes to show where you got *all* of your evidence.

An essay in the “B” range will:

• Illustrate most, but not all of the above characteristics. For example, a “B” essay might:
  o Miss one of the instructions (for instance, perhaps the instructions say to utilize two primary sources, and you used only one).
  o Provide a slightly incomplete answer to the essay question (for instance, perhaps your answer to one of the sub-questions lacks some essential detail).
  o Neglect to include complete explanations for evidence or for historical events/personages.
  o Neglect to include sufficient evidence to support your points.
  o Neglect to include evidence from the readings that would be ideal for supporting your points, or that is very clearly well-suited to the topic at hand.
  o Include points that do not clearly support your thesis (or neglect to make a clear connection between the points and thesis).
  o Have a thesis that is not as clear as it could be, that could do a somewhat better job of answering the essay question, or that isn’t *quite* possible to prove using the resources available to you via this course.
  o Consist primarily of quotations from the textbooks.
  o Occasionally neglect to include footnotes to show where it came from.
  o Be somewhat difficult to read because it is poorly written.
  o Have some structural problems that make it difficult to follow.
  o Fall slightly short of the assigned page limit, or go on well beyond the limit.

An essay in the “C” range will:

• Exhibit only a few of the characteristics listed for the “A” range; OR
• Exhibit many or most of the characteristics listed for the “A” range, but fall severely short in areas that heavily impact the quality of the essay. For instance, a “C” essay might:
  o Have severe structural problems, making the essay very difficult to follow.
  o Be very difficult to read because it is poorly written.
  o Miss multiple components of the instructions, or one component that is critical to the purpose of the essay (for instance, perhaps you missed one or two of the sub-questions entirely, or provided an incomplete answer to the primary essay question).
 o Have a thesis that is unclear, doesn’t answer the essay question, or cannot be proven with the resources available via this course.
 o Utilize poor spelling and grammar to the extent that it is very difficult to follow.
 o Utilize limited evidence from the readings.
 o Fall well short of the page limit.
 o Utilize factually incorrect information in a few places.
 o Severely neglect to use footnotes to show where your information came from (meaning you use very few footnotes, or none at all).

An essay in the “D” range will:

- Exhibit almost none of the characteristics listed for the “A” range; OR
- Fall severely short in areas that are absolutely critical for the assignment at hand. For instance, a “D” essay might:
  - Be severely short (less than two pages, for instance).
  - Utilize almost no evidence from the readings.
  - Utilize substantial amounts of factually incorrect information.
  - Be severely off-topic.
  - Include no discernible thesis.
  - Neglect to utilize the standard essay format at all.

An “F” essay will exhibit none of the characteristics listed for the “A” range (no evidence from the readings, doesn’t answer the question, no thesis, no proper essay format, etc.).

How to Use Primary Sources

Most of the readings for this course are secondary sources, but you will also be required to analyze some primary sources. Primary sources are generally authored by individuals who lived during the period being studied; they are direct products of that period. In contrast, secondary sources are written by historians; they are (usually) modern-day analyses and interpretations of primary sources. For example, the United States Constitution is a primary source, whereas modern-day books and articles about American Independence are secondary sources. Both kinds of sources are valuable to students of history, but they need to be read and analyzed with the context of their production in mind. This process of understanding context is a little more complex for primary sources than it is for secondary sources.

Imagine that two of your classmates—let’s call them Juanita and Leonard—were in a long-term relationship, but recently broke up. Let’s say you want to find out why. You would probably want to ask Juanita and Leonard themselves—after all, no one would know more about their breakup than they do, given that they experienced it themselves. In other words, they have unmatched expertise on the incident.
On the other hand, given their direct involvement and the probable emotional duress of the breakup, are Juanita and Leonard likely to have an objective view of what occurred? Their accounts may even completely contradict one another. For instance, perhaps Leonard would blame Juanita for the breakup, accusing her of unfaithfulness, while Juanita might claim that they simply grew apart. Because they were directly involved, Juanita and Leonard’s accounts of the breakup are almost inevitably biased. The context of their testimony—the fact that they had dated for two years, and that the experience was probably emotionally turbulent for both of them—makes their objectivity even more tenuous. And what about their intended audience? Would Leonard, for instance, necessarily relate the same version of events to his best friend? His mother? A new girlfriend? His professor?

Can we still use Juanita and Leonard’s stories to reconstruct the past (in this case, their breakup)? Yes! However, rather than objective accounts of what happened and why, we need to see their testimony as inherently biased, and reflecting a specific context and intended audience. Their accounts can’t necessarily tell us what truly, objectively occurred. But they CAN tell us, for instance, what Leonard wants his new girlfriend to think about the breakup.

The same is true in the case of historical primary sources: we can usually piece together some semblance of objective truth out of primary sources—who did what, when, and why—but these sources generally tell us more about the perspectives and biases of the author (or of their intended audience) than they do about any objective truth. These sources are most useful as historical sources if we place them within their appropriate context.

You need to consider both primary and secondary sources within the context that they were produced, but this is especially important for primary sources, because they are further removed from us in time and often not intended to provide a balanced analysis. For instance, the Restall and Lane textbook for this course—a secondary source—is a recent publication written by historians, published by an academic press, and subjected to peer review by other scholars of the field. On the other hand, the Requerimiento, which you will read for lesson one, is a primary source written by a Spaniard in the early 16th century. Its purpose was not to provide a balanced, scholarly view of colonial Latin American history, but rather to provide a legal and religious justification for conquering indigenous peoples. The purpose, authorship, and context of both the Restall and Lane book and of the Requerimiento inevitably color the information contained therein. Rather than taking either text at face value, you will need to think carefully about what we can really learn from each kind of source, given their purpose, authorship, and the context in which they were produced.

For each primary (and to some extent, secondary) source you read, you will need to consider the following questions:

- Who was the author?
- Why was she/he writing this document? What was its purpose?
- Who was the intended audience?
- What was happening at the time that might have influenced the author’s perspective or depiction? Under what social/political/physical conditions was the document written?
- Given the answers to the above questions, what does this text really reveal?
  What can we learn from it, and what can’t we learn from it?
Citations

In accordance with the norms of the historical profession, your footnotes must follow the Chicago Manual of Style. See here for details on how to cite using Chicago Style: http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html (Links to an external site.)

Look at the materials list for this course. Note that they are all listed in Chicago style footnote format. You may want to review this list to help you cite these sources in your assignments.

You need to insert a footnote every time you refer to a fact, idea, or interpretation you learned from the readings for this course. This means that you should include a footnote every time you:

- Quote one of the readings directly.
- Paraphrase information from one of the readings.
- Summarize an argument, interpretation, or idea from the readings.
- Refer to any kind of information you learned from this course. (As a general rule, if you didn’t know it before you started this course, then you probably need a citation for it.)

Generally speaking, you need to use a footnote for evidence from the readings, but not for your own analysis/interpretation, or for evidence/information that you have already cited. This is the case regardless of whether you are quoting the author directly (using his/her own words in quotation marks) or paraphrasing (putting the idea into your own words). Here is an example:

Using citations properly is critical to succeeding in this course. There are two reasons for this. First, using citations is essential for avoiding plagiarism, which is a serious offense. Regardless of whether you are quoting directly or paraphrasing, you need to insert a citation every time you use someone else’s work, to show that that work is not your own.[1] Second, evidence from historical sources is an important component of any history paper; without it, a student could not prove his or her thesis.[2] Citations indicate where the student found this evidence, which, in turn, lends credence to the student’s thesis. Because citations are critical to proving a thesis and to avoiding plagiarism, failing to use them properly will adversely affect assignment grades for this class.

Note where I used citations in the above example. Why did I use a citation after some sentences, but not others? There are no direct quotes here—I never used anyone else’s words. So, why should I cite?

Each footnote indicates that the sentence preceding it contains information I found in another source. Because I learned from Charles Lipson’s book that it is necessary to insert a citation every time I use someone else’s work, I included a footnote after I mentioned that fact. I also would have used a footnote if I had quoted him directly. But I still need to cite even though I didn’t use his exact wording.

Doesn’t this mean that I would need to cite every single sentence I write? No—not the ones that describe my own analysis/explanation/interpretation. For instance, sentences like “using citations properly is critical to succeeding in this course” are my own work. I used the fact from Lipson to prove this point about the role of citations in this course, but the point itself is my own. In any situation where a reader might wonder, “how did you know that?” you will probably need a footnote.
Think of it this way: the facts/ideas/interpretations you learn from the readings are logs, which you need to “build” your assignments for this class. These “logs” provide evidence to back up your assertions. To some extent, you get to choose which of those logs to use, and what kind of “house” (assignment!) to build out of them. Since the logs were not of your making, you need to use footnotes to show which trees they came from. Your own arguments and analyses that you use to link these logs together, however, need no citations.

For more information on when to use citations, please see: https://www.princeton.edu/pr/pub/integrity/pages/cite/

EXAMS

You will take the midterm and final exams in-person at a proctored testing center. The exam request links within the course will take you through this process; additional information is available on the University Extension website.

The midterm exam will include eight identification questions and one essay question. You will have three hours to complete the exam. The identification questions will be selected from among those you already answered as part of your assignments in Lessons One through Six. The essay questions will address similar themes to those you have been writing about for your assignments. However, rather than covering the material from a single lesson, they will ask you to draw together what you have learned from multiple lessons. Reference the Midterm Exam Overview page for more details.

The final exam will be cumulative, meaning that it will include material from throughout the entire course. The format and allowed time is identical to the midterm exam. Reference the Final Exam Overview page for more details. You must pass the final exam to pass the course.

GRADING

Your final grade for the course will be calculated as follows:

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<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>11 Instructor-Graded Assignments</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>30%</td>
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You must pass the Final Exam to pass the course. You must also earn an overall passing grade:

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<th>Grade</th>
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