THE ATLANTIC WORLD:
SOCIETY, CULTURE, & ECONOMICS, 1492-1804

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
In 1492, Columbus sailed the Ocean Blue; or so goes the rhyme well known to every American schoolchild. That famed voyage initiated events and processes that radically transformed the society, culture, economics, and politics of the early modern world, laying the blueprint for the world we live in today. Looking at the histories of four continents- Europe, Africa, North America, and South America- this lecture and light discussion-based seminar explores the development of an “Atlantic World” from the late fifteenth to the early nineteenth centuries through the experiences and exchanges of those who inhabited it- Europeans, indigenous people, and slaves. Following an emerging trend in Atlantic historiography, this course challenges the assumption that the Atlantic Ocean served strictly as a barrier to human interaction and exchange. Instead, we will consider the argument that the Atlantic Ocean served as a conduit of exchange between the Old World and the New, facilitating the distribution of commodities, culture, and society across the Ocean in the Spanish, British, French, Dutch, and Portuguese empires. We will examine the social, cultural, and economic results of exchange in the Atlantic including the migrations of people (both voluntary and forced), labor and exchange systems, the rise of new commodities, changes in family life, and the revolutionary movements of the eighteenth century.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:
By the end of the course, students will be able to:
1) Provide a definition of “Atlantic” history and assess its validity as an analytic category.
2) Understand the intercolonial exchanges, similarities, and differences between the Spanish, English, French, Dutch, and Portuguese empires.
3) Confidently cite and analyze (translated) primary source documents from the Atlantic World and explain their significance to Atlantic historiography.
4) Identify “key” developments in Atlantic history such as migrations, the slave trade, new commodities, imperial ideologies, and revolutionary movements.

COURSE STRUCTURE: This class is primarily a lecture course. However, on several occasions, as noted in the syllabus, there will be in-class discussions of our readings. These discussions will cover both primary and secondary sources that have been assigned. The purpose of these discussions is to tie lecture material to reading, discussing the important developments in Atlantic History. The course is broken into four units: Unit 1: Introductions & Migrations; Unit 2: New Economic Systems; Unit 3: Society, Family, & Identity; Unit 4: The Atlantic in Revolution. The mid term examination will cover Units 1 & 2. The final exam is cumulative, drawing on all four units.
COURSE REQUIREMENTS/ASSIGNMENTS:

- **10% Class Attendance and Participation** - Students are expected to attend all class meetings and be active participants in our class discussions. Aim for at least two contributions to our discussions. Excessive unexcused absences (more than 2) will negatively impact your grade.

- **25% Reflection Papers (5)** - On select Thursdays students will submit a short (min-one page, max-two pages, double-spaced) writing exercise that analyzes at least one of that week’s required primary source documents. You should not merely summarize what the author said, but include a thoughtful analysis of the text, relating it back to our secondary source readings and class discussions.

- **30% Mid-Term Exam** - This take home exam is due Tuesday, April 1 at the beginning of class and covers Units 1 and 2. The exam will consist of two parts: 1) “IDs” (5 out of 8) and 2) one essay question, three to five typed, double-spaced pages. Further information will be provided closer to test date.

- **35% Final Exam** - This is a comprehensive exam with two parts: 1) ID’s (8 of 12) and an essay (5-6 handwritten pages, single-spaced) exam. It is scheduled for Friday, May 9.

READING SCHEDULE:

### UNIT I: INTRODUCTIONS & MIGRATIONS

**WEEK 1: The Atlantic as an Analytic Category**

**Tuesday 1/21: Introductions & What is “Atlantic” history?**

⇒ **Required**: Bernard Bailyn, *Atlantic History: Concept and Contours* (to be completed before class)

⇒ **Due**: A brief paragraph that provides your definition of “Atlantic” history-geographic, temporal, and thematic.

**Thursday 1/23: Assessing “Atlantic”**


**WEEK 2: Comparative Conquest & Possession**

**Tuesday 1/28: Cortés & Newport: Spanish & English Conquest**

⇒ **Required**: “Introduction: Worlds Overseas” and Chapter 1 “Intrusion and Empire” in J.H. Elliott *Empires of the Atlantic World*

**Thursday: 1/30: Ceremonies of Possession**

⇒ **Required**: “Introduction: Ceremonies of Possession in Europe’s Conquest of the New World, 1492-1640” in Patricia Seed, *Ceremonies of Possession*
WEEK 3: Migration Patterns
Tuesday 2/4: English Migration
⇒ Required: Alison Games, “Migration and the Atlantic World” in Migration and the Origins of the English Atlantic World

Thursday 2/6: French & Spanish Migration
⇒ Required: Kenneth Banks, “The Rise of the French Atlantic to 1762,” in Chasing Empire Across the Sea

WEEK 4: African Encounters
Tuesday 2/11: Early Euro-African Commerce
⇒ Required: Chapters 2 (p. 43-72) in John Thornton, Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World

Thursday 2/13: Slavery in Africa
⇒ Required: Chapter 4 “The Process of Enslavement and the Slave Trade” (pp. 98-125) in Thornton, Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World

WEEK 5: Forced Migrations: Living the Slave Trade
Tuesday 2/18: Discussion: African Views of Slavery- Princes of Calabar I
⇒ Required Primary Source: Introduction and Chapters 1 and 2 in Randy Sparks, The Two Princes of Calabar
⇒ Recommended: Chapter 5 (p. 129-151) in Thornton, Africa and Africans

Thursday 2/20: Discussion: African Views of Slavery- Princes of Calabar II
⇒ Required Primary Source: Chapters 3-6 in Randy Sparks, The Two Princes of Calabar
⇒ Due: Reflection Paper 1

UNIT 2: NEW ECONOMIC SYSTEMS

WEEK 6: The Rise of Sugar
Tuesday 2/25: Consumption
⇒ Required: Chapter 2 “Consumption” in Mintz, Sweetness and Power

Thursday 2/27: Production
⇒ Required: Chapter 3 “Production” in Mintz, Sweetness and Power
WEEK 7: Plantation Society
Tuesday 3/4: Rise of Plantation Class: Barbados
⇒ Required: Chapter 2 “The Rise of the Planter Class: Barbados” in Richard Dunn, Sugar & Slaves

Thursday 3/6: Discussion: Plantations in Brazil
⇒ Required: Chapter 1 “The Sugar Plantation” in Stuart Schwartz Sugar Plantations in the Formation of a Brazilian Society
⇒ Required Primary Source(s): Before class browse The Atlantic Slave Trade and Slave Life in Americas collection, in particular the galleries: Maps: Africa, New World, Slave Trade; Capture of Slaves & Coffles in Africa; Plantations
⇒ Due: Reflection Paper 2

WEEK 8: Consumer Revolution
Tuesday 3/11: European Household Economy & Industrious Revolution
⇒ Required: Jan de Vries “Between Purchasing Power and the World of Goods: Understanding the Household Economy in Early Modern Europe” (posted to BB)

Thursday 3/13: Consumer Revolution & the Colonies
⇒ Required: T.H. Breen, “The meaning of things: Interpreting the consumer economy in the eighteenth century”

MIDTERM EXAMS WILL BE DISTRIBUTED THURS- DUE TUES 3/25

WEEK 9: Intercolonial Trade & Migration
Tuesday 3/18: The Case of New Orleans
Required: Chapter 3: “A Backwater Entrepot” in Dawdy, Building the Devil’s Empire: French Colonial New Orleans

Thursday 3/20: The Case of Virginia
Required: Chapter 4 “Intercolonial Migration” in Hatfield, Atlantic Virginia

UNIT 3: SOCIETY, FAMILY, & IDENTITY

WEEK 10: Atlantic Family Life
Tuesday 3/25: Discussion: Samuel Sewall’s Diary Part I
⇒ Required: Introduction and Chapters 1-5 in Puritan Family Life: The Diary of Samuel Sewall, ed. Judith Graham

MIDTERM TAKE HOME EXAM DUE TODAY

Thursday 3/27: Discussion: Samuel Sewell’s Diary Part II
⇒ Required Primary Source: Chapters 6-10 in Puritan Family Life
⇒ Due: Reflection Paper 3
WEEK 11: Inculcating Identity onto Natives
Tuesday 4/1: Discussion: Jesuit Adaptation
⇒ Required: “When in Rome” in Axtell, The Invasion Within
⇒ Required Primary Source: Selections from The Jesuit Relations

Thursday 4/3: Praying to be English
⇒ Required: “Reduce Them to Civility” in Axtell, The Invasion Within
⇒ Due: Reflection Paper 4

WEEK 12: SPRING BREAK- NO CLASS

UNIT 4: ATLANTIC IN REVOLUTION

WEEK 13: Origins of Revolution in Print and Material Culture
Tuesday 4/15: Discussion: The Ideological Origins of Revolution
⇒ Required: Chapter 2 “Sources and Traditions,” The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution by Bernard Bailyn
⇒ Required Primary Source: Selection of Revolutionary pamphlets

Thursday 4/17: The Marketplace of Revolution
⇒ Required: Breen- Marketplace of Revolution Selections
⇒ Due: Reflection Paper 5

WEEK 14: American Colonies in Revolution
Tuesday 4/22: Men and the American Revolution
⇒ Required: Chapter 2: “Reluctant Revolutionaries” and Chapter 3 “A Well Ordered Revolution” in Gross, The Minutemen and Their World

Thursday 4/24: Revolution outside the 13 Original Colonies
⇒ Required: Chapter 6, “The Crisis of American Independence” in An Empire Divided by Andrew O’Shaughnessy

WEEK 15: Revolution in French Colonies
Tuesday 4/29: French Slave Revolts- Haiti
⇒ Required: Chapter 1, “Slavery, War, and Revolution in the Greater Caribbean” by David Patrick Geggus A Turbulent Time: The French Revolution and the Greater Caribbean

Thursday 5/1: Wrap Up: The Atlantic As a Category of Analysis