

History 251/251W – The African Diaspora in Latin America, 1500-2015

Class Location: Wilmot 116

Class Hours: Mondays & Wednesdays, 11:50-1:05 pm

Email: pablo.sierra@rochester.eduOffice Hours: Mondays 1:30-3:30, Rush Rhees 458 (4th floor)

This course focuses on the historical experiences of Africans and their descendants in the Latin American region. While Brazil, Cuba and Haiti form the core regions for the class, people of African descent had a considerable impact on culture, religion and politics in less-studied areas (such as Mexico and Argentina). Our readings and discussions will address early interactions between Central African rulers with Portuguese priests, merchants and slave traders. We will then focus on the history of the Caribbean and Spanish America through an African diaspora lens through colonialism and Independence. Afro-Latin@s' struggle for inclusion in the nation-state and the formation of Black political parties will center our focus on the national period (1820-present). While grounded in history, the course also explores visual and literary representations of Blackness and racial mixture, the poetry of Nicolás Guillén, Tato Laviera and others. Students will write two essays, including a research paper on a topic of their choice.

Requirements and Grading

No knowledge of Spanish, Portuguese, French or Haitian Kreyol is needed for this class. All class materials have been written or translated into English. No previous knowledge of the Latin American region is required either, just a willingness to learn through different cultures and countries.

The course will feature a short (4-5 page) essay and a longer research essay on a topic of your choice. The first essay is worth 20% of your final grade and will be based on your interpretation and analysis of a specific prompt which I will give out.

Your second paper is centered on research you will conduct on a topic of your choice. The objective is to produce a well-researched, original paper on any aspect of the African diaspora within the Latin American region. This will require you to identify a research topic in a timely manner in order to request InterLibrary Loan materials. Students enrolled in HIS 251 or AAS 251 will write a 15-page paper. Students taking the writing-intensive (HIS 251W) course will produce a 20-page paper. The first version of the paper will be worth 10% and will be revised substantially after this initial submission. Finishing the revised paper requires holding at least one research meeting with Prof. Sierra during office hours. The final version paper will amount to 30% of your final grade for the semester.

Two open-note quizzes, each worth 10% (and taken during class) will be given during the semester.

Our discussion board, “En Diáspora” is worth 10% of your grade for the semester as well. Every Sunday night you will post an online article (and its active link) on any aspect of the African Diaspora around the world. Twitter debates, Remezcla articles, YouTube videos, newspaper reports in any language are welcome, as long as they inform our course. We will briefly discuss these items to start off our Monday sessions. The point is to connect the relevance of the Afro-Latin@ past to our present and future(s).

Attendance and participation in a seminar of this nature is essential and will be worth 20% of your final grade. This means all assigned readings must be completed in time for Thursday's discussion sections. You are responsible for coming to class prepared with notes and questions for discussion.

In accordance with the College credit hour policy, which awards 4 credit hours for courses that meet for the equivalent of 3 periods of 50 minutes each week, students are expected to devote at least one hour each week identifying the main lines or argument in course readings, working alone or in groups.

You are allowed one unexcused absence during the semester. Subsequent unexcused absences will result in a 10% reduction from your final attendance grade. Excused absences require a medical note from a physician's office in case of illness. For other situations see me directly during office hours.

First essay	10%
Research essay first version	10%
Research essay final version	30%
Two quizzes	20%
Online discussion board	10%
Attendance	20%

Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. All assignments and activities associated with this course must be performed in accordance with the University's Academic Honesty Policy. More information is available at: www.rochester.edu/college/honesty.

Required Books

Candelario, Ginettea. *Black Behind the Ears: Dominican Racial Identity from Museums to Beauty Shops*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2007. ISBN 978-0822340379

Ferrer, Ada. *Freedom's Mirror: Haiti and Cuba in the Age of Revolution*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014. ISBN 978-1107697782

Sue, Christina A. *Land of the Cosmic Race: Race Mixture, Racism and Blackness in Mexico*. Oxford University Press, 2013. ISBN 978-0199925506

Silva, Eduardo. *Prince of the People: The Life and Times of a Brazilian Free Man of Color*. Verso, 1993. ISBN 9780860914174

Wheat, David. *Atlantic Africa and the Spanish Caribbean, 1570-1640*. Chapel Hill: Omohundro Institute, 2016. ISBN 978-1469647654 (also available on Library website via JSTOR)

* readings posted to BlackBoard are indicated with (BB), others available via Library website

Course Schedule

Week 1 - The African Diaspora + Latin America: Definitions – Jan. 16

- Colin Palmer, "Defining and Studying the Modern African Diaspora" (BB)
- Nicolas Guillén, selections (in class)
- Who Are You?

Week 2 – Afro-Mexicans in the 21st Century – Jan. 23 (No Class, Mon. Jan. 21 – MLK Jr. Day)

- Christina Sue, *Land of the Cosmic Race*, 1-194
- Film Screening: Henry Louis Gates Jr., *Black in Latin America: Mexico*

Week 3 - *The Iberian Precedent – Jan. 28 and 30*

- James Sweet, “The Iberian Roots of American Racist Thought,” 143-166 (BB)
- Henry Louis Gates Jr., “The Life and Work of Juan Latino,” 14-51 (BB)
- Erin Rowe, “After Death, Her Face Turned White”, 726-754 (BB)

FIRST QUIZ ON JAN. 30

*** Friday, February 1, 4-6 pm – Mandatory Event with Dr. Hazel Carby, “Difficult Times”
- Rush Rhees, Hawkins Carlson Room**

Week 4 – *Atlantic Africa and its Settlers – Feb. 4 and 6*

- David Wheat, *Atlantic Africa*, 1-141

Week 5 – *Laying Claims, Forming Family – Feb. 11 and 13*

- David Wheat, *Atlantic Africa*, 142-281

FIRST ESSAY DUE FEB. 13 @ 11:50 am

Week 6 – *Faiths upon Faiths – Feb. 18 and 20*

- Linda Heywood and John Thornton, *Central Africans, Atlantic Creoles*, 169-226 (BB)
- James H. Sweet, *Recreating Africa*, 119-160 (BB)
- Nicole von Germeten, *Black Blood Brothers*, 77-103 (BB)

Week 7 – *Freedom by the Sword: Military Service and Empire – Feb. 25 and 27*

- Jane Landers, “Gracia Real de Santa Teresa de Mose: A Free Black Town in Spanish Colonial Florida”, 9-30 (BB)
- Alex Borucki, *From Shipmates to Soldiers*, 84-114, 183-214 (Ebook via Library page)

Week 8 – *Haitian Rebels and Cuban Ghosts I – Mar. 4 and 6*

- Ada Ferrer, *Freedom’s Mirror*, 1-188

RESEARCH MEETINGS MAR. 3-7

Week 9 – *SPRING BREAK (NO CLASS) – Mar. 11 and 13*

Week 10 – *Haitian Rebels and Cuban Ghosts II – Mar. 18 & 20*

- Ada Ferrer, *Freedom’s Mirror*, 189-346

Week 11 – *Afro-Cuban Memory: Then and Now – Mar. 25 & 27*

- Emma Christopher, “Josefa Diago and the Origins of Cuba’s Ganga,” 133-144 (BB)
- George Reid Andrews, *Afro-Latin America*, Ch. 2 and 3
- Film Screening: *We Are They*

Week 12 – *Invisible Citizens – Apr. 1 & Apr. 3*

- A Conversation with Dr. Erika D. Edwards, UNC-Charlotte
- Erika D. Edwards, “The Making of a White Nation,” 1-8
- Thompson, *Ebony* (1973), Era Bell Thompson, “Land of the Vanishing Blacks”
- George Reid Andrews, *Afro-Latin America*, Ch. 4

FIRST DRAFT OF RESEARCH ESSAY DUE APR. 1

Week 13 – *Brazilians, Soldiers, Freedmen – Apr. 8 & 10*

- Eduardo da Silva, *Prince of the People*, 1-161

Week 14 – *Identity, Power and Blackness in the Caribbean* – Apr. 15 & 17

- Ginettea Candelario, *Black Behind the Ears*, 1-129
- Readings on Nicolás Guillén

SECOND QUIZ ON APR. 17

Week 15 – *Children of Hispaniola: Dominican and Haitian Diasporas* – Apr. 22 & 24

- Ginettea Candelario, *Black Behind the Ears*, 130-264

Week 16 – *The Afro-Latino Moment* - Apr. 29 & May 1

- NYT, “Dominicans of Haitian Descent Denied Citizenship” (BB)
- *The Afro-Latin@ Reader*, selections

FINAL PAPER DUE MAY 3 @ 4 pm

Additional Suggested Readings

Anderson, Mark. *Black and Indigenous: Garifuna Activism and Consumer Culture in Honduras*. University of Minnesota Press, 2009.

Barnet, Miguel. *Biography of a Runaway Slave*. Curbstone Press, 1994.

Childs, Matt D. *The 1812 Aponte Rebellion in Cuba and the Struggle against Atlantic Slavery*. University of North Carolina Press, 2009.

Landers, Jane. *Atlantic Creoles in the Age of Revolutions*. Harvard University Press, 2010.

Newitt, Malyn. *The Portuguese in West Africa, 1415-1670: A Documentary History*. Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Reid Andrews, George. *Blackness in the White Nation: A History of Afro-Uruguay*. University of North Carolina Press, 2010.

Matthew Restall, “Invisible Warriors: The Myth of the White Conquistador.” In *The Seven Myths of the Spanish Conquest*, pp. 44-64. Oxford University Press, 2004.

Talmon-Chvaicer, Maya. *The Hidden History of Capoeira: A Collision of Cultures in the Brazilian Battle Dance*. University of Texas Press, 2008.

Additional Essay Collections

De la Fuente, Alejandro and George Reid Andrews, eds. *Afro-Latin American Studies: An Introduction*. Cambridge University Press, 2018.

Jiménez Román, Miriam and Juan Flores, eds. *The Afro-Latin@ Reader: History and Culture in the United States*. Duke University Press, 2009.

McKnight, Kathryn Joy and Leo Garofalo, eds. *Afro-Latino Voices: Narratives from the Early Modern Ibero-Atlantic World, 1550-1812*. Hackett Publishing, 2009.

Restall, Matthew and Ben Vinson III, eds. *Black Mexico: Race and Society from Colonial to Modern Times*. University of New Mexico Press, 2009.