

The African Diaspora in Latin America, 1441-1804
HIST 251/251W
AAAS 215

Physical Class Location: Meliora 205
Email: pablo.sierra@rochester.edu

Class Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 3:25-4:40 pm
Office Hours: T/Th. 1-2 pm Rush Rhees 458 (4th floor)

Class Zoom ID: 962 4007 8087
Zoom meeting password: upon request

This course focuses on the historical experiences of Africans and their descendants in the Latin American region between 1441 and 1804. 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). 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 up to Haitian independence. Students will develop a research essay on a topic of their choice throughout the semester. All class materials have been written or translated into English. No previous knowledge of the Latin American region is required, just a willingness and commitment to learn about different cultures and countries.

Requirements and Grading

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

Our discussion board, “En Diáspora” is worth 5% of your grade for the semester as well. Every Sunday night, one student will be required to 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. All other students will write a brief comment reacting to the discussion thread over the course of the day on Monday. We will briefly discuss these items to start off our Tuesday sessions. The point is to connect the relevance of the Afro-Latin@ past to our present and future(s).

This course is centered on writing 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. Identifying an appropriate topic and the primary and secondary sources to pursue the paper is often the most difficult part of this assignment. ***I urge you to begin the research process NO LATER than Week 3.*** You will track the weekly progress of your research paper in an informal journal/blog that will be posted to Blackboard. The first version of the paper will be worth 20% and will be revised substantially after its initial submission. Students in HIST 251W will produce a 10-page paper for their first version. Students in other sections will write an 8-page paper. Students enrolled in HIST 251 or AAAS 251 will write a final 12-page paper. Students taking the writing-intensive (HIST 251W) course will produce a 15-page paper. Finishing the revised paper requires holding at least one research meeting with me during office hours (in person or by Zoom). The final version of the research paper will amount to 35% of your final grade for the semester. Altogether, the research paper accounts for 55% of your final grade. *Yes, it is that important.*

Attendance and participation in a class 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.

Research essay first version	20%
Research essay final version	35%
Quiz #1	10%
Quiz #2	10%
<i>En Diáspora</i> Voicethread	5%
Attendance/participation	20%

Credit Hour Policy

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 recording an informal journal on the progress on their research papers. Starting week 3, you will write 200 words on a weekly basis to document the progress of your research paper. You will post these informal entries to Blackboard under Discussion Board.

Attendance

You are allowed one unexcused absence during the semester. Subsequent unexcused absences will result in a 10% reduction from your final attendance/participation grade. Anyone unable to attend class in-person, should notify me that they will attend via Zoom. I urge you to please be cautious to the extreme this semester. **If you have been in close to proximity to someone who has been ill, please attend class by Zoom. Obviously, if you feel ill yourself, stay in your dorm or at home and secure testing.** For any number of other situations, please write me so we can discuss over Zoom.

Mask and Social Distancing Policy

If you are attending class in person, you must wear a mask appropriately (over your nose and mouth). You must also maintain a distance of six feet from other students and instructor(s). You must do this every class session and for the duration of each class session. If you fail to do this, you will be politely reminded of the requirement and then asked to leave if you do not comply. Students who refuse to adhere to the requirement for mask wearing or social distancing during the course will be in violation of the COVID-19 Community Commitment and will be referred to the Student Conduct system. Such referrals will lead to conduct hearings and may result in disciplinary action. If you do not want to wear a mask, you may consider taking the course remotely (online).

Other Policies

This is a DACA/Undocu-friendly course. The UofR and I are committed to full inclusion in education for all students (Dreamers, Undocumented People and everyone else). Services and reasonable accommodations are available to students with temporary and permanent disabilities, to students with DACA or undocumented status, to students facing mental health issues, other personal situations, and to students with other kinds of learning needs. Please feel free to let me know if there are circumstances affecting your ability to participate in class or if I can connect you to University resources. For more information see the Burgett Intercultural Center's page:

<https://www.rochester.edu/college/bic/support-inclusion/international-students.html#Undocumented>

The University of Rochester respects and welcomes students of all backgrounds and abilities. In the event you encounter any barrier(s) to full participation in this course due to the impact of disability, please contact the Office of Disability Resources. The access coordinators in the Office of Disability Resources can meet with you to discuss the barriers you are experiencing and explain the eligibility process for establishing academic accommodations. You can reach the Office of Disability Resources at: disability@rochester.edu; (585) 276-5075; Taylor Hall.

Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. When in doubt, it is always preferable to cite another scholar's work. 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

Bryant, Sherwin. *Rivers of Gold, Lives of Bondage: Governing through Slavery in Colonial Quito*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014.

Heywood, Linda. *Njinga of Angola: Africa's Warrior Queen*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2017.

Scott, Julius. *The Common Wind: Afro-American Currents in the Age of the Haitian Revolution*. New York: Verso, 2018.

* all other readings and articles will be posted to Blackboard (BB) or are available via the UofR Library website

Course Schedule

Module I – Africa, America and Power

Week 1 - The African Diaspora + Latin America: Definitions – Thursday, Aug. 27

- Palmer, “Defining and Studying the Modern African Diaspora” (BB)
- Guillén, poetry selections (in class)

Week 2 – Pre-Atlantic Africa - Sept. 1 and 3

- Green, *The Rise of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade*, 1-28, 69-94 (BB)
- Primary Source: *The Portuguese in West Africa*, 148-151, 74-78 (BB)

Week 3 - The Iberian Precedent – Sept. 8 and 10

First Discussion Board

- Sweet, “The Iberian Roots of American Racist Thought,” 143-166 (BB)
- Blumenthal, “The Casa dels Negres: Black African Solidarity” 225-246 (BB)
- Fra-Molinero, “Juan Latino and his Racial Difference,” 326-344 (BB)

Week 4 – Power, Slavery and Colonial Rule – Sept. 15 and 17

First Quiz on Sept. 17

- Bryant, *Rivers of Gold*, 1-83
- Sierra Silva, “The Slave Trade to Colonial Mexico,” 73-102 (BB)

Module II – Resistance in the African Atlantic

Week 5 – Resisting and Negotiating Slavery – Sept. 22 and 24

- Woodruff Stone, “America’s First Slave Revolt,” 195-217 (BB)
- Bryant, *Rivers of Gold*, 115-150
- Wheat, *Atlantic Africa*, 216-265

Week 6 – The Warrior Queen, pt. I – Sept. 29 and Oct. 1

- Heywood, *Njinga of Angola*, 1-113

Week 7 – The Warrior Queen, pt. II - Oct. 6 and 8

- Heywood, *Njinga of Angola*, 114-244
- In-class screening/response: *Njinga Queen of Angola* (2018, dir. Sérgio Graciano)

Week 8 – African Culture Arrives – Oct. 13 and 15

- Sweet, *Recreating Africa*, 119-160 (BB)

Research Paper 1st Version due Oct. 15

Module III – Navigating Religion, Creating Identity

Week 9 – Black Brotherhoods, Black Catholicism – Oct. 20 and 22

- Valerio, “That there be no black brotherhood,” 1-22 (BB)
- Rowe, “After Death, Her Face Turned White,” 726-754 (BB)
- Bryant, *Rivers of Gold*, 84-114

***Thursday, Oct. 22 Student-led Q&A Session with guest
Prof. Miguel Valerio (Washington University in St. Louis)***

Week 10 – Chocolate, Food and Blackness – Oct. 27 and 29

- Katzew, *Casta Paintings* selections (BB)
- Scott, “Measuring Ingredients: Food and Domesticity in Mexican Casta Paintings” 70-79 (BB)
- Abarca, “Culinary Mestizaje: An Afro-Latino Collective Sensory Memory,” 101-112 (BB)

Week 11 – Freedom by the Sword: Military Service and Empire – Nov. 3 and 5

- Landers, “Gracia Real de Santa Teresa de Mose: A Free Black Town in Spanish Colonial Florida,” 9-30 (BB)
- Vinson, “Articulating Space: The Free-Colored Military Establishment in Colonial Mexico,” 150-171 (BB)
- Borucki, “Leadership and Networks in Black Militias, Confraternities and Tambos,” 84-114 (BB)

Module IV – The Challenge of Freedom

Week 12 – Making Saint-Domingue Black - Nov. 10 and 12

- Sierra Silva, “Afro-Mexican Women in Saint-Domingue,” 3-34 (BB)
- John Garrigus, *Before Haiti*, 21-50
- Joan Dayan, “Codes of Law, Bodies of Color,” 283-308 (BB)

Second Quiz on Nov. 12

Week 13 - *Winds of Revolution* - Nov. 17 and 19

- J. Scott, *The Common Wind*, 1-117

Week 14 – *Haitian Independence* - Nov. 24 (No class Thanksgiving on Nov. 26)

- J. Scott, *The Common Wind*, 118-211

Week 15 – *The Haitian Diaspora* - Dec. 1 and 3

- Ferrer, *Freedom's Mirror*, 189-235 (BB)
- Primary Source: *Slave Revolution in the Caribbean*, 120-125, 168-170, 188-199 (BB)

Week 16 – Dec. 8 (last class)

- Goodbyes, farewells, hasta luego, até logo

Research Paper – Final Version due on Dec. 8

Additional Suggested Readings

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

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

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

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

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