

LATIN AMERICA: THE COLONIAL EXPERIENCE, 1492–1821
HIST 4171

FALL 2026/ Tu & Th 3.55 pm-5:15 pm, CLASSROOM WH 115

Rex Galindo, David

Office hours: Tuesday 2.55 pm – 3.55 pm; Thursday 11 am - 12 pm. **WH 243** (HISTORY DEPT.)

Zoom Office Hours: By appointment.

Email david.rexgalindo@unt.edu

Please contact me by email if you have any questions or concerns. I will reply as soon as possible, usually within 48 hours. I do not respond to emails on weekends.

Description

This course surveys the history of Latin America from pre-contact civilizations and the arrival of European explorers to the Wars of Independence. It analyzes the strategies and logic of conquest, the material, psychological, and environmental effects deriving from the expansion of empire, the issues of slavery, labor systems, religion, and honor, and the movements towards independence.

Learning Outcomes: In this course, we will explore the arrival of Native Americans, Europeans, Africans, and Asians into the Americas and how their encounters, often violent, shaped new societies. Covering the period from the first settlements in the Americas over a thousand years ago to the era of national independence, the course analyzes how interactions among these groups fostered and developed unique cultures and societies. We will study exploration, conquest, colonization, daily life, adaptation, oppression, and resistance. As we will see, the interactions among Native Americans, Africans, and Europeans transformed America into a “New World,” just as America transformed native peoples, Africans, and Europeans into new peoples. We will also see that *Americanos* or Americans shared a common experience of dispossession, success, violence, slavery, colonialism, and oppression.

Ultimately, in less than forty years, most American colonies gained independence from their European rulers. We will explore the processes of emancipation in Latin America as part of the larger historical context of revolutions in France, its Caribbean colony Haiti, and British North America. Central to Latin American history, we will examine the development of ideas such as freedom, slavery, liberty, and sovereignty, and their importance to different human groups.

The course depends on how scholars interpret historical phenomena (secondary sources) and the accounts of the protagonists (primary sources).

Grading

1. In-class Reaction papers. (15%)

I'll ask you to write four responses to the two book reading assignments. I'll bring a few questions, and you'll have 20 minutes to answer them. I will ask for citations from the books, so please bring them to class. I'll collect your answers right after you've finished them.

12% (4 * 3.5%) of your final grade will depend on your in-class reaction papers to the readings.

2. In-class book analysis ON THE WHOLE BOOK (10%)

I will ask you to write a book analysis at the end of the semester. Please check the schedule. You will have 30 minutes to complete the analysis. Please include citations from the book; bring it to class. I will collect your answers immediately after you finish.

3. Final Essay. (30%)

An essay will account for an additional 30% of your final grade. You will submit both an early draft and a final version. For these, see **Writing Requirements** below—research proposal 5% and Final essay 25%.

4. Exams. (30%)

Mid-term: Week 10 (30% of the final grade)

5. Class participation. (15%)

First, I do not plan to speak for more than half of any session. Learning is a two-way process focused on sharing information. Therefore, discussion will be the core of the learning experience. That means you should read and come prepared before class. We will all engage in learning by reading and discussing the material. Not doing the reading is like cheating yourself and your classmates. Likewise, you are expected to attend class. Missing classes will disrupt the flow of the session and hinder the learning process. It will also impact your participation grade.

Map Test

There will be a map test. Once you pass the test, it will not count toward your final grade; you should know where the main countries, cities, and physical features are in Latin America. If you fail in the second week, you will have until the third week to pass the test. If you do not pass the test, there will be a penalty of **2 points** to your final grade.

Writing requirements

Please choose a topic that relates to a specific subject of personal interest within the course framework. My only requirement is that you select the topic in consultation with me. The subject can be a person's life, a community, a particular problem, a social group, an event, or anything else, as long as you can find reliable scholarship.

The **research proposal** should include a bibliography, a hypothesis, objectives, and essential questions. The proposal is due in **WEEK 6**.

In your final version, I will ask you to submit a **1,500 to 2,000-word essay** (excluding bibliography and notes) on the topic you select. **This essay will be due in WEEK 16.**

Aim to make each essay a small piece of perfection. Please don't wait until the night before it's due to write it. Give yourself time to set it aside for a day after writing, then review it. Doing so will help you notice problems and mistakes clearly, and you'll likely see obvious ways to improve.

Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) refers to software systems and platforms that produce new content, such as text, images, audio, or video, using generative models. These models recognize patterns in large datasets, allowing them to generate data in response to specific prompts that can often resemble human-created content.

Under the UNT Honor Code, using GenAI content without proper credit or replacing your own work with GenAI undermines the learning process and violates UNT's academic integrity policy. Therefore, submitting class work created with GenAI tools without attribution or relying on them to complete assignments breaches academic integrity and will be handled according to university policy.

Grading balance (%)

In-class responses on readings	25
Final Essay	30
Mid-term Exam	30
Class participation	15

Each assignment is worth up to 100 points. The final course grade, based on the percentage list, will also be capped at 100 points.

Grading Scale (90+ = A; 80-89 = B; 70-79 = C, 60-69 = D, Under 60 = F)

Accessibility

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodations for students with disabilities. Students seeking reasonable accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with a reasonable accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request reasonable accommodations at any time; however, ODA notices of reasonable accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of reasonable accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member before implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of reasonable accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. For additional information,

refer to the Office of Disability Access website (<http://www.unt.edu/oda>). You may also contact ODA by phone at (940) 565-4323.

Academic Integrity Standards and Consequences

According to UNT Policy 06.003, Student Academic Integrity, academic dishonesty occurs when students engage in behaviors including, but not limited to, cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, forgery, plagiarism, and sabotage. A finding of academic dishonesty may result in a range of academic penalties or sanctions, ranging from admonition to expulsion from the University.

Other basic norms

Office hours allow you to ask for clarification or find support with understanding class material. So, visit me! I encourage you to connect with me for support. Additional in-person and virtual office hours may be offered as the semester concludes. You well know that we want you to be successful.

UNT strives to offer you a high-quality education and a supportive environment, so you learn and grow. As a faculty member, I am committed to helping you be successful as a student. To learn more about campus resources and information on how you can be successful at UNT, go to unt.edu/success and explore unt.edu/wellness. To get all your enrollment and student financial-related questions answered, go to scrappysays.unt.edu.

Every student in this class should have the right to learn and engage in an environment of respect and courtesy from others. We will discuss our classroom's habits of engagement. I also encourage you to review UNT's student code of conduct to start with the same baseline civility understanding (Code of Student Conduct) (<https://policy.unt.edu/policy/07-012>).

Attendance: You should attend every class as part of the learning process.

Dean of Students

If serious illness or injury, death or illness in the family, mental health matters, economic instability, pregnancy and parenting, legal matters, etc., interfere with your academic success, you may want to speak with someone at the Dean of Students' office.

<http://deanofstudents.unt.edu>

Textbooks

They are available at the bookstore on campus and through various book websites. Please, purchase hard copies:

- Matthew Restall, *Seven Myths of the Spanish Conquest*, 2nd edition, Oxford UP, 2021
- Catalina de Erauso, *The Lieutenant Nun: Memories of a Basque Transvestite in the New World*, Michele and Gabriel Stepto (translators), Bacon Press, 1996
- Kris Lane, *Potosí: The Silver City That Changed the World*, U of California P, 2021.

Other Readings

I will upload the other readings to Canvas.

This is an upper-division course, so you should read all the materials assigned for each week (books, book chapters, articles, and primary sources).

Class Schedule

WEEK 1

Aug. 18: INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE.

Aug. 20: SOME LATIN AMERICAN GEOGRAPHY

WEEK 2

Aug. 25: PRE-CONTACT AMERICA

Read for discussion: Broda, Johanna. "Political Expansion and the Creation of Ritual Landscapes: A Comparative Study of Inca and Aztec Cosmvision." *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 25, no. 01 (2015): 219–38. doi:10.1017/S0959774314001061.

Aug. 27: PRE-CONQUEST ATLANTIC

Read for discussion: THORNTON, John K. *A Cultural History of the Atlantic World*. Cambridge University Press, 2012. Ch. 1: "The Formation of the Atlantic World, 1250–1600."

Map test

WEEK 3

Sept. 1: Visit to the Library with Douglas Campbel, Librarian. We will meet at Willis Library, Experimental Learning Lab, Room 236 (2nd floor).

Sept. 3: THE PORTUGUESE EMPIRE

Last day for passing the map text without losing 2 points of your final grade.

WEEK 4

Sept. 8: CONQUEST AND SPANISH LAW

Read for discussion: Palacios Rubios' *Requerimiento*.

Sept. 10: SPANISH CONQUISTADORS

Read for discussion: Restall, Chapters 1, 2, &3. Come ready with your questions to discuss.

In-class reaction paper #1 (20 minutes)

WEEK 5

Sept. 15: SURVIVAL

Read for discussion: Restall, Chapters 4, 5, 6, &Afterword. Come ready with your questions to discuss.

In-class reaction paper #2 (20 minutes)

Sept. 17: COLONIAL ADMINISTRATION

Read for discussion: Nelson Fernando González Martínez, “Communicating an Empire and Its Many Worlds: Spanish American Mail, Logistics, and Postal Agents, 1492–1620.” *Hispanic American Historical Review* 2021, 101 (4): 567–596. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1215/00182168-9366571>

WEEK 6

Sept. 22: PRIMARY SOURCES ON THE SPANISH ADMINISTRATION. THE COUNCIL OF THE INDIES. THE ARCHIVES OF THE INDIES.

Look at the website for discussion: Take a look at this website before class:
<https://pares.culturaydeporte.gob.es/inicio.html>

Sept. 24: PALEOGRAPHY: READING PRIMARY SOURCES

Read for discussion: TBA.

RESEARCH PROPOSALS DUE. UPLOAD THEM TO TURNITIN

WEEK 7

Sept. 29: EUROPEAN RESEARCH COUNCIL PROJECT: THE ARTERY OF EMPIRE

We will watch and discuss the video Panamá Viejo. Conditions of life and death at Panama Viejo: a bioarchaeological study of human skeletal remains (1519-1671)

Watch the video: An Artery of Empire. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5BmxppS4oks>

Oct. 1: THE LIEUTENANT NUN

A NUN TURNED SOLDIER

Read for discussion: Chapters 1-12. Come ready with your questions to discuss.

In-class book analysis ON THE WHOLE BOOK (30 minutes)

WEEK 8

Oct. 6: A DISGUISED LIFE IN SOUTH AMERICA

Read for discussion: Chapters 13-26. Come ready with your questions to discuss.

Oct. 8: INDIGENOUS LABOR

Read for discussion: Camilla Townsend, “Slavery in Precontact America.” In C. Perry, D. Eltis, S. Engerman, & D. Richardson (Eds.), *The Cambridge World History of Slavery* (The Cambridge World History of Slavery, pp. 553-570). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021.
doi:10.1017/9781139024723.023

WEEK 9

Oct. 13: AFRICAN LABOR

Read for discussion: Kenneth Morgan, *A Short History of Transatlantic Slavery* (Short Histories), Introduction and Chap. 1.

Oct. 15: TRANSATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE

Read for discussion: www.slavevoyages.org

WEEK 10

Oct. 20: SLAVERY IN PORTUGUESE AMERICA

Read for discussion: Peter Bakewell and Jacqueline Holler. *A History of Latin America to 1825*, 3rd Edition, excerpts from Ch. 13.

Oct. 22: **MID-TERM EXAM**

WEEK 11 POTOSÍ: A CASE STUDY

Oct. 27: AMERICAN SOCIETIES IN THE 17TH CENTURY

Read for discussion: Robert C. Schwaller “‘For Honor and Defence’: Race and the Right to Bear Arms in Early Colonial Mexico,” *Colonial Latin American Review*, 21:2 (2012), 239-266, DOI: 10.1080/10609164.2012.695620.

Oct. 29: POTOSÍ I

Discussion: Lane, *Potosí*, Preface, Introduction, and Chapters 1, 2, &3.

In-class reaction paper #3 (20 minutes)

WEEK 12

Nov. 3: POTOSÍ II

Discussion: Lane, *Potosí*, Chapters 4, 5, and 6.

In-class reaction paper #4 (20 minutes)

Nov. 5: SOCIETY IN THE 18TH CENTURY & BOURBON REFORMS

Read for discussion: Lane, *Potosí*, Chapter 7, 8 & Epilogue.

WEEK 13

Nov. 10: THE MISSION

Watch for discussion: Watch the movie *The Mission* (1986) before class. Come to class ready with questions. Read James Schofield Saeger, “The Mission and Historical Missions: Film and the Writing of History”

Nov. 12: INDEPENDENCE OF SPANISH AMERICA

Read for discussion: Simón Bolívar, Letter from Jamaica (1815).

WEEK 14

Nov. 17: BRAZILIAN INDEPENDENCE

Read for discussion: Peter Bakewell and Jacqueline Holler. *A History of Latin America to 1825*, 3rd Edition, excerpts from Ch. 14 on Independence. We may possibly meet online this day, as I will be traveling to a conference.

Nov. 19: I will be at a conference.

Individual work on Final papers.

WEEK 15 THANKSGIVING: November 23-27, 2025.

WEEK 16

Dec. 1: Students work on their papers. Individual meetings via Zoom.

Dec. 3: Students work on their papers. Individual meetings via Zoom.

FINAL PAPER DUE

Getting Help

Technical Assistance

At UNT, we have a Student Help Desk that you can contact for help with Canvas or other technology issues.

UIT Help Desk: [UIT Student Help Desk site](http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/index.htm) (<http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/index.htm>)

Email: helpdesk@unt.edu

Phone: 940-565-2324

In Person: Sage Hall, Room 130

Walk-In Availability: 8 am-9 pm

Telephone Availability:

- Sunday: noon-midnight
- Monday-Thursday: 8 am-midnight
- Friday: 8 am-8 pm
- Saturday: 9 am-5 pm

Laptop Checkout: 8 am-7 pm

For additional support, visit [Canvas Technical Help](https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10554-4212710328)

(<https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10554-4212710328>)

Student Support Services

UNT provides mental health resources to students to help ensure there are numerous outlets to turn to that wholeheartedly care for and are there for students in need, regardless of the nature of an issue or its severity. Listed below are several resources on campus that can support your academic success and mental well-being:

- [Student Health and Wellness Center](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center>)
- [Counseling and Testing Services](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services>)
- [UNT Care Team](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care>)
- [UNT Psychiatric Services](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center/services/psychiatry) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center/services/psychiatry>)
- [Individual Counseling](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services/services/individual-counseling) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services/services/individual-counseling>)

Other student support services offered by UNT include

- [Registrar](https://registrar.unt.edu/registration) (<https://registrar.unt.edu/registration>)
- [Financial Aid](https://financialaid.unt.edu/) (<https://financialaid.unt.edu/>)
- [Student Legal Services](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-legal-services) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-legal-services>)

- [Career Center](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/career-center) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/career-center>)
- [Multicultural Center](https://edo.unt.edu/multicultural-center) (<https://edo.unt.edu/multicultural-center>)
- [Counseling and Testing Services](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services>)
- [Pride Alliance](https://edo.unt.edu/pridealliance) (<https://edo.unt.edu/pridealliance>)
- [UNT Food Pantry](https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources/food-pantry) (<https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources/food-pantry>)

Academic Support Services

- [Academic Resource Center](https://clear.unt.edu/canvas/student-resources) (<https://clear.unt.edu/canvas/student-resources>)
- [Academic Success Center](https://success.unt.edu/asc) (<https://success.unt.edu/asc>)
- [UNT Libraries](https://library.unt.edu/) (<https://library.unt.edu/>)
- [Writing Lab](http://writingcenter.unt.edu/) (<http://writingcenter.unt.edu/>)
- [MathLab](https://math.unt.edu/mathlab) (<https://math.unt.edu/mathlab>)

Course Evaluation

Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT) is the student evaluation system for UNT and allows students the ability to confidentially provide constructive feedback to their instructor and department to improve the quality of student experiences in the course.

UNT Policies

Acceptable Student Behavior

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The University's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including University and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. Visit UNT's [Code of Student Conduct](https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct) (<https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct>) to learn more.

Access to Information - Eagle Connect

Students' access point for business and academic services at UNT is located at: my.unt.edu. All official communication from the University will be delivered to a student's Eagle Connect account. For more information, please visit the website that explains Eagle Connect and how to forward e-mail [Eagle Connect](https://it.unt.edu/eagleconnect) (<https://it.unt.edu/eagleconnect>).

Student Evaluation Administration Dates

Student feedback is important and an essential part of participation in this course. The student evaluation of instruction is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. The survey will be made available during weeks 13, 14 and 15 of the long semesters to provide students with an opportunity to evaluate how this course is taught. Students will receive an email from "UNT SPOT Course Evaluations via IASystem Notification" (no-reply@iasystem.org) with the survey link. Students should look for the email in their UNT email inbox. Simply click on the link and complete the survey. Once students complete the survey they will receive a confirmation email that the survey has been submitted. For additional information, please visit the [SPOT website](http://spot.unt.edu/) (<http://spot.unt.edu/>) or email spot@unt.edu.

Sexual Assault Prevention

UNT is committed to providing a safe learning environment free of all forms of sexual misconduct, including sexual harassment sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. Federal laws (Title IX and the Violence Against Women Act) and UNT policies prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, and therefore prohibit sexual misconduct. If you or someone you know is experiencing sexual harassment, relationship violence, stalking, and/or sexual assault, there are campus resources available to provide support and assistance. UNT's Survivor Advocates can assist a student who has been impacted by violence by filing protective orders, completing crime victim's compensation applications, contacting professors for absences related to an assault, working with housing to facilitate a room change where appropriate, and connecting students to other resources available both on and off campus. The Survivor Advocates can be reached at SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu or by calling the Dean of Students Office at 940-565- 2648. Additionally, alleged sexual misconduct can be non-confidentially reported to the Title IX Coordinator at oeo@unt.edu or at (940) 565 2759.

Use of Student Work

A student owns the copyright for all work (e.g. software, photographs, reports, presentations, and email postings) he or she creates within a class and the University is not entitled to use any student work without the student's permission unless all of the following criteria are met:

- The work is used only once.
- The work is not used in its entirety.
- Use of the work does not affect any potential profits from the work.
- The student is not identified.
- The work is identified as student work.

If the use of the work does not meet all of the above criteria, then the University office or department using the work must obtain the student's written permission.

Download the UNT System Permission, Waiver and Release Form

Emergency Notification & Procedures

UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify students with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). In the event of a university closure, please refer to the UNT Learning Management System (LMS) for contingency plans for covering course materials.