

History of the Spanish Conquest  
Fall 2016  
University of Montevallo  
Dr. John R. Bawden

**Meets:** TR 2-3:15 UMOM 309

**Contact:** jbwawden@montevallo.edu (205) 665-6179

**Office Hours:** MW 9-1230, Thursday 4-5, UMOM 305 (or by appointment)

**Course Credit:** 3 hours

### Course Overview

The Spanish conquest of the Americas had massive consequences for the world system and millions of people. It is a fantastic story, cataclysmic, violent, and frequently misunderstood, both in terms of what actually happened and the factors that made it possible for Spaniards to topple enormous empires in the Andes and Central America. In this course we will read eyewitness accounts of the conquest along with scholarly interpretations of it. What does it all mean? What should we know about political, military, and religious cultures in Spain and the Americas prior to 1492? We will also consider the people and places that Spaniards failed to conquer, most notably in southern Chile, Patagonia, and parts of the American southwest.

### Course objectives

1. Contextualize Iberia and the Americas on the eve of conquest.
2. Provide an overview of the Spanish Conquest, its themes, and controversies.
3. Students will read and analyze primary sources as well as secondary sources, identifying and evaluating their central arguments.
4. Help students to appreciate ambiguity in historical argument and presentation.

### Student Learning Outcomes

1. Students will practice effective communication, both orally and in writing.
2. Students will develop analytical skills and critical thinking.
3. Students will gain global awareness.
4. Students will learn effective use of primary sources and electronic databases.

### Required Texts

Bernal Díaz, *The Conquest of New Spain*, Penguin Classics, 2002

Miguel Leon-Portilla, *The Broken Spears*, Beacon Press, 2006

Matthew Restall, *Seven Myths of the Spanish Conquest*, Oxford Press, 2004

### E-Reserves (available on canvas)

Mario Vargas Llosa, "Questions of Conquest: What Columbus Wrought, and What He Did Not"

Charles Mann, "The Artificial Wilderness" in *1491*

Inga Clendinnen, "Local Perspectives" in *Aztecs: An Interpretation*

William D. Phillips, Jr., and Carla Rahn Phillips, "Spain in the Fifteenth Century"

John F. Guilmartin Jr., "The Cutting Edge: An Analysis of the Spanish Invasion and Overthrow of the Inca Empire"

Elizabeth Hill Boone, "Introduction" in *Writing without Words*

Robert Charles Padden, "Cultural Adaptation and Militant Autonomy among the Araucanians of Chile"

### Course Assessment

Participation: 15%

Quizzes: 25%

Journal Entries: 35%

Research paper: 25%

### Grading

**A:** 100-90% **B:** 89-80% **C:** 79-70% **D:** 69-60% **F:** 59-0%

## **Graduate Level**

Students taking History 511 course should speak with me about an additional assignment that will be assessed along with all other requirements that appear in the syllabus.

## **Writing Assignments**

On six occasions you will write short responses to questions about the assigned reading materials. Most of the readings are located under 'files' on canvas. A separate document provides the prompt for each journal entry. The syllabus indicates when these written assignments are due. All journal assignments are due at the beginning of class. At the end of the course, you will receive one grade for the entire journal worth twenty percent of your grade.

## **Participation**

Every Thursday I will take attendance and keep track of who participates when we will discuss primary sources, writing assignments, and other materials related to the course. Your participation grade is a composite of your attendance on Thursday and the quality of your participation on those days.

## **Research Paper**

In this course you will write a 5-7 page research paper using **at least** two primary sources (sources from the time period under study) and **at least** two scholarly sources (books or articles written by academics in the last fifty years). You may write on any subject related to the Spanish Conquest, but it is important to narrow the focus to a specific time, place, and theme (warfare, gender, religion, art, native peoples, slavery, economy, etc). The introductory paragraph of your paper will ask a "how" or "why" question and then answer it with a succinct thesis. The more specific your question, the more easily you can focus on your topic and develop a good thesis. To meet the requirement of two secondary sources and two primary sources students may want to consult with me during my office hours. One place to find primary sources is: <http://goo.gl/AWH1LB>

Week thirteen students will submit the first 1-2 pages of their research paper that introduces the topic, question, and proposes a thesis. Additionally, students will indicate which primary and secondary sources they intend to use for the assignment. During class time student will briefly discuss their research, sources, and why they selected the topic. After student presentations there will be an in-class draft workshop. Each student will receive feedback from another student. It must be numbered, double-spaced, with a 12 point font, and 1" margins and have a title that reflects the subject of the paper and your argument. Finally, the paper *must* be footnoted according to the Chicago Manual of Style.

## **Disability Policy**

The University of Montevallo provides equal opportunity to qualified students. If you have a disability (medical, physical, learning, psychological, etc.) and wish to request disability-related accommodations to complete course requirements, contact Disability Support Services (665-6250).

## **Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty**

Plagiarism means using the exact words of another person's work/writing without acknowledgement of your source through the use of quotation marks and correct citation/documentation; rephrasing a passage of another writer without giving proper credit; using someone else's facts or ideas without acknowledgement; using a piece of writing for one course that was already used in a previous course (or in courses in which you are simultaneously enrolled) without express permission from both instructors to do so; presenting fabricated or falsified citations or materials. A plagiarist/cheater is subject to failure in the course and/or appearance before the Justice Council.

## **Course Schedule**

### **WEEK I**

August 23 - Introductions

August 25 - The Spanish conquest five hundred years later

## **Fishbowl Discussion**

Charles Mann, "The Artificial Wilderness"

Mario Vargas Llosa, "Questions of Conquest: What Columbus Wrought, and What He Did Not"

WEEK 2

Aug 30 – Indigenous people in the Americas

Sep 1 – The Aztec Empire

Miguel Leon-Portilla, *The Broken Spears*, xxviii-xlvi.

Inga Clendinnen, *Aztecs: An Interpretation*, 46-54.

**Journal Entry #1 due Sept 1**

WEEK 3

Sep 6 – Maya Civilization

Sep 8 – The Inca Empire

**Fishbowl Discussion**

Starn, Degregori, Kirk (eds.), *The Peru Reader*, 50-81 and Bernabé Cobo, *History of the Inca Empire*

WEEK 4

Sep 13 – Medieval Spain

Sep 15 – *Reconquista*

William D. Phillips, Jr., and Carla Rahn Phillips, “Spain in the Fifteenth Century”

**Journal Entry #2 due Sept 15**

WEEK 5

Sep 20 – Columbus and Spain

Sep 22 – First encounters, Taíno Perspectives

**Fishbowl Discussion**

Read: [http://avalon.law.yale.edu/15th\\_century/colum.asp](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/15th_century/colum.asp)

Read: <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/columbus1.asp>

Read: <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/columbus2.asp>

WEEK 6

Sep 27 – From Cuba to the mainland

Sep 29 – Spaniards in Mexico

Inga Clendinnen, *Ambivalent Conquests*, 3-19

Bernal Díaz, *The Conquest of New Spain*, 15-106

**Quiz on Sep 29**

WEEK 7

Oct 4 – Veracruz to Tenochtitlán

Oct 6 – From *la noche triste* to Spanish triumph

Bernal Díaz, *The Conquest of New Spain*, 114-277

**Journal Entry #3 due Oct 6**

WEEK 8

Oct 11 – Nahua perspectives

Oct 13 – No Class – Founder’s Day

**Fishbowl Discussion on October 11**

Chapters Fourteen, Fifteen, and Sixteen in Miguel Leon-Portilla, *The Broken Spears*

WEEK 9

Oct 18 - Atahualpa and the Inca Empire

Oct 20 – Spaniards consolidate their position

**Fishbowl Discussion**

John F. Guilmartin Jr., “The Cutting Edge: An Analysis of the Spanish Invasion and Overthrow of the Inca Empire”

WEEK 10

Oct 25 – The Crown and the Conquistadors

Oct 27 – The New Laws (1542)

**Journal Entry #4 due Oct 27**

**Quiz on Oct 27**

WEEK 11

Nov 1 – Spaniards in search of a new “Mexico” or “Peru”

Nov 3 - Guest presentation: Dr. Ezekiel Stear, “The Indies in Ink: Native Codices in Colonial Spanish America”

**Read Elizabeth Hill Boone, “Introduction,” *Writing without Words* for Nov 3**

WEEK 12

Nov 8 – The unconquered: Araucanians

Nov 10 – The unconquered: Apaches

Robert Charles Padden, “Cultural Adaptation and Militant Autonomy among the Araucanians of Chile” in

John E. Kicza (ed.) *The Indian in Latin American History: resistance, resilience, acculturation*, 69-84.

**Journal Entry #5 due Nov 10**

WEEK 13

Nov 15 – The Conquest in Cinema

Nov 17 – Myths of conquest

Matthew Restall, *Seven Myths of the Spanish Conquest*, 1-63.

Chapters One and Two in Miguel Leon-Portilla, *The Broken Spears*

**Research paper introduction with bibliography due Nov 17**

WEEK 14

Nov 22 – Legacies of conquest

Nov 24 – HOLIDAY

WEEK 15

Nov 29 – Historiographical perspectives

Dec 1 - Myths of conquest

Matthew Restall, *Seven Myths of the Spanish Conquest*, 64-130.

**Quiz Dec 1**

**Journal Entry #6 due Dec 1**

**NO FINAL EXAM**

**Research paper due Tuesday, Dec 6 at 4pm**