

History 411  
The Spanish Conquest  
Spring 2019  
University of Montevallo

**Instructors:** Dr. John R. Bawden

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

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

**Office Hours:** MW 9-12, 1-3, 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 Central Andes and Mesoamerica. 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 before 1492.
2. Provide an overview of the Spanish Conquest, its themes, and controversies.
3. Read and analyze primary sources as well as secondary sources, identifying and evaluating their central arguments.
4. 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 while doing original research.
3. Students will gain global awareness.
4. Students will learn effective use of primary and secondary sources.

### **Required Texts**

Ida Altman, *Contesting Conquest*, Penn State Press, 2017 **ISBN-10:** 0271078561

Bernal Díaz, *The Conquest of New Spain*, Penguin Classics, 2002 **ISBN-10:** 0140441239

Miguel Leon-Portilla, *The Broken Spears*, Beacon Press, 2006 **ISBN-10:** 9780807055007

Matthew Restall, *Seven Myths of the Spanish Conquest*, Oxford Press, 2004 **ISBN-10:** 0195176111

### **E-Reserves** (available on canvas)

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

Gary Urton and Alejandro Chu, "The Invention of Taxation in the Inka Empire"

Bernabé Cobo, *History of the Inca Empire*

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

Hernando Cortés, excerpts from the *Second Letter to Charles V*, 1520

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

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

## Course Assessment

Participation: 20%

Quizzes: 20%

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 five 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

Your participation grade is a composite of your attendance on Thursday and the quality of your participation on the days when we will discuss primary sources, writing assignments, and other materials.

## 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.

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 Withdrawal Deadline**

The last day for students to withdraw from a course and receive a grade of "W" is March 15.

## **Student E-Mail**

UM e-mail is an official means of communication among students, faculty, and administrators at the University of Montevallo and might be THE official means of communication between you and your instructors. You may receive very important UM e-mail messages from offices on campus for which some timely response will be required. The official email system for students is identified by [userID@forum.montevallo.edu](mailto:userID@forum.montevallo.edu) and can be accessed at the Campus Email link on the Montevallo website. You are responsible for monitoring and managing your account regularly, even during breaks. **You are responsible for all announcements, requests, and/or sensitive information delivered to your UM e-mail account [including Canvas messages], including information related to this course.** You may electronically forward your UM e-mail to another e-mail address (e.g., @gmail.com, @hotmail.com), but at your own risk. The University is not responsible for the handling of forwarded e-mail. Having e-mail forwarded does not absolve you from the responsibilities associated with communication sent to your official UM e-mail address. If you have any questions regarding or problems with your UM email account, you should contact the Solution Center.

## **Course Schedule**

### **WEEK 1**

January 10 – Course introduction

### **Discussion**

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

### **WEEK 2**

January 15 - Indigenous people in the Americas

January 17 - The Aztec Empire

### **Discussion**

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

Review: Annual tax receipts of the Aztec Empire (classroom handout)

### **WEEK 3**

January 22 – Maya Civilization

January 24 – The Inca Empire

### **Discussion**

Gary Urton and Alejandro Chu, "The Invention of Taxation in the Inka Empire"

Bernabé Cobo, *History of the Inca Empire*

#### WEEK 4

January 29 – Medieval Spain

January 31 – *Reconquista*

#### Discussion

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

**Journal #1 due 1/31**

#### WEEK 5

February 5 – Columbus and Spain

February 7 – First encounters

#### 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>

**Quiz #1 on 2/7**

#### WEEK 6

February 12 – From Cuba to the mainland

February 14 – Spaniards in Mexico

#### Discussion

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

#### WEEK 7

February 19 – Veracruz to Tenochtitlán

Read: <https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/mod/1520cortes.asp>

February 21 – From the “Sad Night” to the fall of Tenochtitlán

#### Discussion

Bernal Díaz, *The Conquest of New Spain*, 107-277

**Journal Entry #2 due 2/21**

#### WEEK 8

February 26 – Conquest of the Yucatán and Mexico’s west

February 28 – Nahua perspectives

#### Discussion

Miguel Leon-Portilla, *The Broken Spears*, 91-164

Read Ida Altman’s introduction to *Contesting Conquest*, 1-20

#### WEEK 9

March 5 – Atahualpa and the Inca Empire

March 7 – Spaniards consolidate their position

#### Discussion

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

#### WEEK 10

March 12 - The Crown and the Conquistadors

March 14 – The New Laws (1542)

**Quiz #2 on 3/14**

WEEK 11

March 19 – The Spiritual Conquest

March 21 – Skype chat with Ida Altman

**Discussion**

Ida Altman, *Contesting Conquest*, 23-120

**Journal Entry #3 due 3/21**

SPRING BREAK

WEEK 12

April 2 – The unconquered: Araucanians

April 4 - The unconquered: Apaches

**Discussion**

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

**Journal Entry #4 due 4/4**

WEEK 13

April 9 – The Conquest in Cinema: Aguirre the Wrath of God

April 11 – The Conquest in Cinema: Aguirre the Wrath of God

**Discussion**

Lope de Aguirre’s letter (e-reserve)

**Research paper introduction with bibliography due 4/11**

WEEK 14

April 16 – Legacies of conquest

April 18 – Myths of conquest

**Discussion**

Matthew Restall, *Seven Myths of the Spanish Conquest*, 1-130.

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

**Journal Entry #5 due 4/18**

WEEK 15

April 23 – Historiographical perspectives

April 25 – Wrapping up

**Quiz #3 4/25**

**Research paper due Tuesday, April 30 at 3pm**