This seminar focuses on the connections, interactions and exchanges that crisscrossed (and sometimes went beyond) the Atlantic Ocean from the 15th to the early 19th centuries. Beginning with European expansion into the Americas and West Africa, we will concentrate on the development of transatlantic empires, the slave trade, and the trade in plantation-produced commodities, as well as social, cultural, intellectual, and political developments associated with them. Our ending point will be the late-18th century political revolutions, which were shaped by transatlantic interactions but which ushered in a new era in global history.

The aims of this course, like those of other graduate seminars, are multiple: to familiarize you with the major themes in the history of the early modern Atlantic world; to introduce you to the major historiographical interventions and arguments in this field; and to hone your skills in effective reading, writing, and intellectual discussion. The course follows a discussion format based on a common set of readings. To give you practice in the tasks that historians routinely undertake, I will ask you to prepare book reviews of several of our readings as well as skim some supplementary books well enough to present them briefly to the class. These supplementary books will be paired with our course readings in order to give you a sense of the historiographical contours of certain topics and debates. By the end of the course, I will ask you to write a historiographical paper about a topic or debate of your choosing. In addition, to help you think about your future teaching and about broad themes, I will also ask you to prepare a draft syllabus for an undergraduate course on global or Atlantic history.

All required (but not supplemental) books will be available for purchase at Student Stores as well as on reserve in Davis Library.

Your Responsibilities, in Detail:

1. Class discussions. The success of our class will be determined largely by your participation. Students will take turns making a 5-10 minute opening comment for the
weekly readings to help clarify or illuminate the work under consideration and set the stage for group discussion. This comment should briefly place the work in its historical context as well as refer to its reception in reviews by professional historians. Drawing as appropriate from classmates’ reviews posted on Blackboard (see below), the opening comment should also pose questions to begin the class discussion.

2. Short (about 800 word) reviews of any THREE of our assigned books. These should approximate book reviews published in history journals like the American Historical Review. In general, they should describe the topic, scope, and argument of the book; point out one or two interesting features; and offer a short assessment of its strengths and weaknesses. Each book review should be posted to the course Blackboard site by 10pm the night before we will discuss the book in class. Please make sure you complete at least one by September 25 and all of them by November 13.

3. A brief oral presentation (of about ten minutes) of one of the supplemental readings listed below, delivered in class on the date for which it is listed. Your objective should be to inform your classmates about the topic, thesis, and major contribution of the book, particularly as it compares to the main reading for the week. You will not be expected to read this entire book or to prepare anything written; you should skim it well enough to assimilate its contents in broad outline. If you’d like to suggest a book not listed, please talk to me about it.

4. Draft syllabus, due December 4. You can (and should) work on this throughout the semester. Plan a lecture course for advanced undergraduates on Atlantic or global history, 1400-1800. How would you allocate topics over approximately 15 weeks or 30 class meetings? What readings would you assign? What would the students’ assignments be? Would you use a textbook? Which one?

5. Historiographical essay, due December 14. Choose one of the major themes or debates in early modern global or Atlantic history and write an essay of about 10-12 pages illuminating the major ways that historians have interpreted it. What is the key question of this debate? How have three or more historians answered that question? How do their interpretations build upon, contrast with, contradict, or go beyond earlier ones? Please talk with me in advance about your choice of topic.

All of these assignments will be weighed equally in the determination of your final course grade.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Part I: Getting Oriented
Aug. 28: Introduction

Sept. 4: Atlantic History: State of the Field

- Peter A. Coclanis, “Atlantic World or Atlantic/World?,” *The William and Mary Quarterly* 63, 4 (October 2006) at http://www.historycooperative.org.libproxy.lib.unc.edu/journals/wm/63.4/coclanis.html

Supplemental Reading:

In-class activity: looking at some textbooks. What are the key themes in global or Atlantic history, 1400-1800? I’ll bring the following books; please bring others:

**Part II: Conquest and Colonization**

Sept. 11: 1492 and some of its implications


Supplemental Reading:

Sept. 18: Empire in the Americas

http://muse.jhu.edu.libproxy.lib.unc.edu/journals/journal_of_colonialism_and_colonial_history/v006/6.3scully.html

Supplemental Reading:
- Steve J. Stern, *Peru’s Indian Peoples and the Challenge of Spanish Conquest: Huamanga to 1640, 2nd ed.* (Wisconsin, orig. 1982)

Sept. 25: The Plantation Atlantic
- Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery* (orig. 1944—read any edition, including UNC, 1994)

Supplemental Reading:

Oct. 2: Africans in the Old and New Worlds

Supplemental Reading:

- Slave Trade Database, at [www.slavevoyages.org](http://www.slavevoyages.org)

Supplemental Reading:
- Kerry Ward, *Networks of Empire: Forced Migration in the Dutch East India Company* (Cambridge, 2009)
Oct. 16: Circuits of Commodities


Supplemental Reading:
- Philip Curtin, *Cross-Cultural Trade in World History* (Cambridge, 1984)

Oct. 23: No Class/Fall Break

Oct. 30: “Race” in the Atlantic World (with a visit by Kathryn Burns)


Supplemental Reading:
- María Elena Martínez, *Genealogical Fictions: Limpieza de Sangre, Religion, and Gender in Colonial Mexico* (Stanford 2008)
Nov. 6: The Revolutionary Caribbean
  Supplemental Reading:
  • CLR James, *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint Louverture and the San Domingo Revolution* (orig. 1938)

Nov. 13: The Global American Revolution
  Supplemental Reading:

Nov. 20: No Class (Lisa at a conference)
  Work on your syllabi.

Nov. 27: No Class/Thanksgiving

Dec. 4: Wrapping-Up
  Syllabi due for submission and discussion.

Dec. 14: FINAL PAPERS DUE