HIST 438, Spring 2014

Siglo de Oro:
Spain’s Golden Century

Course Description

This course will introduce students to a relatively understudied, but critical moment in the history of Western European civilization -- the Imperial period of Spanish history known as the Siglo de Oro, or Golden Century, a period introduced by the accidental discovery of the New World in 1492. This discovery made Spain the most powerful and wealthiest nation in Europe for more than a century, producing great triumphs as well as spectacular tragedies. We will explore this complex period in Spanish history through a variety of sources, addressing political, economic, religious, and military topics including the conquest of “New Spain”, the religious conflict between Catholicism and emergent Protestantism, the military expansion of Spanish imperial power, and the flowering of culture in the Spanish court.

Course Objectives

Students taking this course will:
- Learn how Historians ask and answer questions about history
- Learn to read primary sources critically and secondary sources analytically
- Practice developing and writing effective, supported answers to various questions
- Engage in thoughtful analysis and discussion of a variety of primary source documents
- Learn about an heretofore understudied and often misunderstood era in European history

Required Reading

*The following titles are available at the Duckstore; most are also widely available via other book retailers.*


Additional readings indicate by an asterisk (*) are available online via Blackboard or as noted.
Assignments and Grading:

Your course grade will consist of four elements.

1) **Attendance and Participation** in any reading discussions (25%)
2) **One Primary Source Analysis** (3 - 4 Pages) (20%)
3) **Midterm Paper** (4-5 Pages) (25%)
4) **Take Home Paper** (4-5 Pages) (30%)

A Word about Plagiarism: Regrettably, I must make a statement regarding the offense of plagiarism. Any violation of the University of Oregon’s academic policy on plagiarism will result in my taking all necessary administrative action to report the conduct. I take the offense of plagiarism seriously, on an academic and personal level. Serious consequences up to and including failure of the course and expulsion from the University may result from the offense.

Policy Regarding Late Assignments or Make-up Examinations

All assignments are due by the end of class on the scheduled date unless I have granted an extension. Late assignments will receive penalties on the following scale:

- Assignment received late on the assigned date: Two-thirds letter grade penalty.
- Assignment received one day late: Full letter grade penalty.
- Assignment received more than one day late: Two (2) letter grade penalty.
- Assignment received more than two days late: No credit.

You must make all requests for extensions in advance. In the case of midterm or final papers, you must notify me no later than one week prior. Naturally, I will consider emergencies on a case-by-case basis, but be advised that only verifiable emergencies will be acceptable.

Special Needs Note: If you are a student registered with the Accessible Ed Center as eligible for extra time on exams or for other specific needs associated with the class, please let me know immediately. Remember that it is your responsibility to make any arrangements necessary with the Accessible Education Center for exams or other accommodations.

Student Conduct:

General: Please refrain from reading materials unrelated to our course during class. Please keep your voice down in the event you need to clarify a note with a neighbor, etc, and please keep any side conversations to a minimum. Never hesitate to ask a question if you need to do so.

Electronics: Please put cell phones into silent mode before class begins; no texting or viewing messages during class. Please confine your use of laptops or other devices to note taking, as activities unrelated to the course are distracting to me as well as to others and thus unacceptable (even if you sit in the back row). I reserve the right to prohibit the use of all electronics in class at any time.
Schedule of Lectures

Week One:

Roots

Tuesday, April 2
Introduction to the Course; the Idea of Spain
Read: Ruiz, Chapter 1

Thursday, April 4
A Brief History of Medieval “Spain”; the Black Legend

Week Two:

Eve of Empire

Tuesday, April 9
*Los Reyes Católicos*
Read: Ruiz, 175-178; Cowans #1, “Marriage Concessions of King Ferdinand”

Thursday, April 11
The Origins and Nature of the Inquisition

Week Three:

Clash of Civilizations

Tuesday, April 16
Reformation: The Spanish Monarchs as Defenders of the Faith
Read: Ruiz, 81-91; Chapter 4 (entire).

Thursday, April 18
1492: The End of *Convivencia* and the Discovery of the New World
Read: Cowans, #4 “Surrender Treaty of Granada”;
    #5 “Decree of Expulsion of the Jews”;
    #6 “The Expulsion of the Jews from Spain”;
    #7 “Letter from Columbus on the New World”
Begin: *Seven Myths of the Spanish Conquest*
Week Four

Enter the Emperor

Tuesday, April 23
Conquistadors, Mixed Motivations, and New Spain
Read: Cowans, #8 “The Requirement”; Continue Seven Myths

Thursday, April 25
The Conquest of the Mexico
Read: Complete Seven Myths

Week Five

The Fruits of Empire

Tuesday, April 30
Charles V
Read: Cowans, #10 “Demands of the Comuneros” (46-48)

Thursday, May 2
Paper Discussion & Workshop (Paper Due by Monday, May 6, 5:00 PM)

Week Six:

Society and Culture

Tuesday, May 7
Everybody Else: Life for Ordinary Spaniards
Read: Ruiz, Chapter 2; Chapter 9.

Thursday, May 9
A Culture of Honor: Men, Women, and Propriety
Read: Ruiz, 239-244; Cervantes, “The Jealous old Man from Extremadura”

Week Seven

Splendor

Tuesday, May 14
Imperial Spain and the Renaissance

Thursday, May 16
Literacy and Education
Week Eight

A New Order

Tuesday, May 21

Phillip II Meets the World
Read: Cowans, #19 “Portrait of Philip”; #23 “Situation in the Low Countries”; #26 “Events in Antwerp”

Thursday, May 23

The Armada
Read: Cowans #29, “Exhortation for the Soldiers”, #30 “On the Causes of the Armada’s Defeat”.

Week Nine

A Waning Moon

Tuesday, May 28

Philip IV: a Captive Monarch
Read: Cowans #38;

Thursday, May 30

A Society in Decline?
Read: Lazarillo de Tormes

Week Ten

Tuesday, June 4

The Glory and Ignominity of Imperial Spain

Thursday, June 6

Wrap-up and Review

Final Papers Due by 5:00 PM, Tuesday, June 10th

Congratulations to all Graduates, and Happy Summer to all!