



SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY  
MADRID

HIST 3420 M01: The Atlantic World

Spring 2023



(Image: Map by Juan de la Cosa, 1500; the earliest European representation of the Americas; Museo Naval de Madrid)

**Credit(s):** 3  
**Class Meeting Time:** Tues/Thurs, 12:30pm-1:45pm  
**Classroom:** Padre Rubio Hall A006  
**Instructor:** Dr. Bradley Mollmann  
**Instructor's Email:** bradley.mollmann@slu.edu  
**Office:** San Ignacio Hall, 315  
**Office Hours:** Tuesday 10:00am-11:00am, Thursday, 5:00-6:00pm, and by appointment

**Course Description (Catalog):** The Atlantic World began to emerge early in the second millennium CE with increased interaction between Europeans, Africans, and, later, Native Americans. This course will examine the social, cultural, political, economic, and military history of the Atlantic World through the 1830s.

**Extended Course Description:**

This course offers a historical approach to understanding the conflicts and cultures that emerged with the opening of transatlantic trade and migration after 1492. In many ways, the arrival of European colonists in the New World rapidly transformed the globe. Within decades, Indigenous societies were destroyed, environmental catastrophe was unleashed, and the brutal transatlantic slave trade was established. The flood of precious metals mined in the Americas transformed the world economy, and the export of New World agricultural products like tobacco, potatoes, corn, and chocolate reinvented the habits and diets throughout the globe. For many – especially Africans and Indigenous people – the new economic and political regimes were disastrous. Out of the destruction, however, new creative forces emerged. Global trade and exchange were accelerated, hybrid cultures emerged, and revolutions were mounted in the name of liberty.

Through a detailed study of the history of the Atlantic World from the fifteenth to nineteenth centuries, we seek to understand the development of economic, cultural, environmental, and intellectual structures that formed the contemporary Western Hemisphere. The first part of the course begins with the earliest contacts among Africans, Europeans, and Indigenous people, examining the often-exploitative economic and political regimes that explorers attempted to install. Instead of looking at these developments as a one-way process of European imposition,

however, a detailed examination shows a dynamic process of local cooperation, competition, and conflict. The second part of the course examines colonial society with an emphasis on ethnicity, gender, and religion. The third part of the course studies the development and legacy of the transatlantic slave trade, as we read a rare first-hand autobiographical account written by an eighteenth-century escaped slave and abolitionist. In the final part of the course, we study forms of civic engagement that provoked revolutions and independence, engaging with difficult questions regarding the ideals and shortcomings of self-proclaimed enlightened reformers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

### **Course Goals and Student Learning Outcomes:**

As a **3000-level history** course, students will:

- Engage with secondary arguments and historiography on a historical subject.
- Articulate biases, theories, assumptions, and the qualities of good and bad historical arguments.
- Practice the craft of writing as a way of communicating historical information.
- Incorporate feedback and comments from instructors and peers.
- Collaborate and/or give peer feedback on historical projects.
- Evaluate primary sources and incorporate them into historical arguments.
- Practice the crafts of listening, speaking, and writing as ways of communicating historical information

Additionally, this course fulfills the College of Arts and Sciences **Core requirement for Global Citizenship**.

The Global Citizenship requirement is designed to educate students about global and transnational problems and to provide students with the tools to address issues of social justice beyond the United States. In our interconnected world, the actions and decisions made by one government or group have a direct impact on people in other areas of the world. As global citizens and public intellectuals, our students must have the knowledge and tools required to make decisions with far-reaching impact. Students who complete the Global Citizenship requirement will gain a substantial subset of the following capabilities:

- Identify sources of and strategies to address conflict, cooperation or competition in a global or regional context.
- Investigate how people and nations confront inequality and claim a just place, whether in their own societies or in the world.
- Identify how perceptions of “otherness” impact leaders, communities, and community-building in areas beyond the U.S. through the examination of such factors as race, ethnicity, gender, religion, economic class, age, physical and mental capability, and sexual orientation.
- Understand the impact of their lives and choices on global and international issues.
- Understand how their values are related to those of other people in the world.

### **Recommended Textbook:**

Thomas Benjamin, *The Atlantic World: Europeans, Africans, Indians and Their Shared History, 1400-1900* (Cambridge University Press, 2009).

\*Available in the SLU-Madrid library on course reserve, on [Amazon](#), as a [Google ebook](#), or through other online retailers.

### **Required Reading:**

The recommended textbook will provide background and context. Most sessions, however, require additional required readings. Please bring a copy of these readings to class, either printed or on a screen.

### **Grading and Procedures**

10% Attendance and Active Participation

15% Short Written Responses

5% Museum Reflection

25% Midterm Exam

20% Research Project (1% - Research Proposal; 17% - Research Essay; 2% - Presentation)

25% Final Exam

**Attendance and Participation:** Learning is an active process that requires your attendance and willingness to participate. The class format provides ample opportunity for students to share ideas and learn from each other. Our meetings will be most productive when students are prepared with arguments and questions related to the reading. Please plan to arrive on time, stay for the duration of the class, and refrain from the use of phones during class.

Attendance and participation will be graded according to the following rubric:

A – Student almost never misses meetings, is consistently prepared for class, has done a careful reading of primary sources, actively participates in discussions, asks thoughtful questions, and often engages with the ideas of the instructor and fellow students.

B – Student misses few meetings, is usually prepared for class, has read and understood the assigned primary sources, participates in most discussions, asks questions, and sometimes engages with the ideas of the instructor and fellow students.

C – Student demonstrates effort but is inconsistent in attendance, preparation, and/or participation.

D or below – Student is often missing and/or unprepared.

**Reading Responses:** At various points during the semester, you will submit a reading response. These are short and relatively informal assignments that are meant to structure your reading and give you the opportunity to organize your thoughts for class discussion. To get full credit, responses should be completed before class and submitted on Canvas.

**Museum Reflection: (500-1000 words)**

Students will visit Madrid's Museo Naval and write a reflection on their experience. Further assignment details can be found on the Canvas site.

**Primary Source Analysis of The Interesting Narrative: (~1000 words)**

This assignment is an analysis of Olaudah Equiano's The Interesting Narrative. Your analysis should examine the book's portrayal of the Atlantic slave trade and also its function as a piece of abolitionist literature.

**Research Essay/ Presentation: (2,500-3,500 words)**

For this assignment, you will write an 8-10 page research essay on a topic of your choice. The topic of the paper is open to any Atlantic History topic in the period 1492-1840. Organize your essay around a central thesis that takes a stance in an ongoing historical debate. Primary-source research is encouraged, but a satisfactory essay may also be based upon a synthetic analysis of existing secondary sources. Good historical writing balances evidence and analysis. Grading will be based upon how deeply you examine your research question, and also the quality of your written presentation. A topic and preliminary bibliography will be due March 18<sup>th</sup>, and the completed paper will be due April 22<sup>nd</sup>. You will present your work to the class at the end of the semester.

**Grading Scale:**

100-93= A; High achievement and intellectual initiative

92-90= A-; Approaching high achievement

89-87= B+; Slightly higher than above average achievement

86-83= B; Above average achievement

82-80= B-; Approaching above average achievement

79-77= C+; Slightly higher than average achievement

76-73= C; Average achievement

72-70= C-; Below average achievement

60-69= D; Inferior but passing achievement

59-0= F; Failure

**E-mail:** Campus and course announcements will often be handled by e-mail. Students should check their "@slu.edu" e-mail regularly.

**Assessment of Student Learning:** To maintain quality academic offerings and to conform to accreditation requirements, SLU-Madrid regularly assesses its teaching, services and programs for evidence of student learning. For this purpose, SLU-Madrid keeps representative examples of student work from all courses and programs on file, including assignments, papers, exams, portfolios and results from student surveys, focus groups and reflective exercises. Copies of your work for this course may be kept on file for institutional research, assessment and accreditation purposes. If you prefer SLU-Madrid not to retain your work for this purpose, you must communicate this decision in writing to your professor.

**Academic Honesty:** Academic integrity is honest, truthful and responsible conduct in all academic endeavors. The mission of Saint Louis University is “the pursuit of truth for the greater glory of God and for the service of humanity.” Accordingly, all acts of falsehood demean and compromise the corporate endeavors of teaching, research, health care, and community service through which SLU fulfills its mission. The University strives to prepare students for lives of personal and professional integrity, and therefore regards all breaches of academic integrity as matters of serious concern.

The full University-level Academic Integrity Policy can be found on the Provost's Office [website](#). Additionally, SLU-Madrid has posted its [academic integrity policy online](#). As a member of the University community, you are expected to know and abide by these policies, which detail definitions of violations, processes for reporting violations, sanctions and appeals.

Your instructor will review these matters during the first weeks of the term. Please direct questions about any facet of academic integrity to the instructor, the chair of the department of your academic program or the Academic Dean of the Madrid Campus.

**Diversity and Inclusion:** Saint Louis University is committed to fostering a positive, inclusive and welcoming learning and working environment. SLU-Madrid's policies prohibit discrimination based on race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, pregnancy, age, disability, physical appearance, financial or socio-economic status, immigration status, parental or marital status, veteran status or any other protected classification of identity. Discrimination includes any form of unequal treatment such as denial of opportunities, harassment, and violence. Sex-based violence includes rape, sexual assault, unwanted touching, stalking, dating/interpersonal violence, and sexual exploitation.

If you experience or witness any kind of discrimination, you are encouraged (but not required) to report the incident to the SLU-Madrid's Department of Student Life, whose office is located in Padre Rubio Hall ([marta.maruri@slu.edu](mailto:marta.maruri@slu.edu); +34 915 54 58 58, ext. 213. You can also report the incident to the University's Hotline (900-99-0011; then enter 877-525-5669 when asked for the hotline number).

Please know that instructors have a responsibility to inform SLU-Madrid when made aware of incidents of discrimination, harassment sexual misconduct, and/or related retaliation, to ensure that individuals impacted receive information about options for reporting and support resources. If you wish to speak to someone confidentially about any matter, confidential resources are available on campus and off campus:

- Counselors at [SLU-Madrid's Wellness Center](#), located on the third floor of San Ignacio Hall ([wellness-madrid@slu.edu](mailto:wellness-madrid@slu.edu); 915 54 58 58, ext. 230).
- Counselors at Sinews Multilingual Therapy Institute, SLU-Madrid's off-campus counseling and mental health services provider ([www.sinews.es](http://www.sinews.es); 917 00 19 79).
- SLU-Madrid's Campus Minister, Fr. James O'Leary, S.J. ([james.oleary@slu.edu](mailto:james.oleary@slu.edu); 915 54 58 58, ext. 279).

Additional information and resources are posted on our Safety and Security and Community Standards webpages.

**Disability Accommodations and Learning Resources:** In recognition that people learn in a variety of ways and that learning is influenced by multiple factors (e.g., prior experience, study skills, learning disability), resources to support student success are available on campus. Students who think they might benefit from these resources can find out more about:

- Course-level support (e.g., faculty member, departmental resources, etc.) by asking or emailing your course instructor.
- University-level support (e.g., tutoring/writing services, Disability Services) by contacting the Academic Dean's Office ([advising-madrid@slu.edu](mailto:advising-madrid@slu.edu)) or by reviewing the [Academic Resources website online](#).

Students with a documented disability who wish to request academic accommodations must contact Disability Services to discuss accommodation requests and eligibility requirements. Once successfully registered, the student also must notify the course instructor that they wish to access accommodations in the course. Please contact [disabilityservices-madrid@slu.edu](mailto:disabilityservices-madrid@slu.edu) or +34 915 54 58 58, extension 242 or 249. Confidentiality will be observed in all inquiries. Once approved, information about the student's eligibility for academic accommodations will be shared with course instructors via email from Disability Services. Note: Students who do not have a documented disability but who think they may have one are encouraged to contact Disability Services.

For more information about academic accommodations, see the [SLU-Madrid Disability Services webpage](#).

**Needs Security Statement:** Students in personal or academic distress and/or who may be specifically experiencing challenges such as securing food or difficulty navigating campus resources, and who believe this may affect their performance in the course, are encouraged to contact Student Life ([studentlife-madrid@slu.edu](mailto:studentlife-madrid@slu.edu) or +34 915 54 58 58, ext. 213) for support. Furthermore, please notify the instructor if you are comfortable in doing so, as this will enable them to assist you with finding the resources you may need.

**Use of Posted Course Content:** SLU-Madrid prohibits recording and transmission of classroom lectures and discussions by students unless written permission from the class instructor has been obtained and all students in the class as well as guest speakers have been informed that audio/video recording may occur. Recordings, course materials, and lecture notes may not be exchanged or distributed for commercial purposes, for compensation, or for any other purpose other than study by students enrolled in the class. Public distribution of such materials may constitute copyright infringement in violation of Spanish law. Violation of this policy may subject a student to disciplinary action in accordance with SLU-Madrid policies on [Student Rights and Responsibilities and Community Standards](#).

**GDPR Norms Concerning Class Recordings:** In accordance with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), we inform you that as a participant within this on-line classroom, your image and voice may be recorded by Saint Louis University in Spain, S.A., CIF A28654879, in 28003 Madrid (Spain), Avenida del Valle 34, for the sole purpose of the instruction of the said class that you are registered in. This information will be stored for the duration of the on-line class and erased thereafter by the professor of the course. Should you not want your image or voice to be a part of this class recording, please contact your professor to indicate that you will be turning your camera and microphone off and be participating via chat.

In addition, we would like to inform you that all recordings will be available to you on Canvas and are exclusively for the use of the participants of the said class and should not be published on any other platform without the prior consent of all participants that may appear in the recording.

According to the rights conferred by the current GDPR regulation, you may exercise your rights of access, rectification, limitation of treatment, deletion, portability and opposition to the processing of your personal data, as well as the consent given for the treatment of it by directing your requests to the address indicated above or by sending an email to [dpo-madrid@slu.edu](mailto:dpo-madrid@slu.edu).

## Spring 2023 Course Outline

### Week 1

Jan 12 – Course Intro

### Week 2 - Casting off

Jan 17 – Atlantic World Definitions and Antecedents

**Read:** “The Roots of an Atlantic System”

Jan 19 – Christopher Columbus and his World

**Read:** Columbus, “Letters from the New World”; Robert Carle, “Remembering Columbus, Blinded by Politics”

**Reading Response Due**

Week 3

Jan 24 – The “Devastation of the Indies” and The Valladolid Debate

Jan 26 – Montezuma, Mesoamerica, and the Encounter with Cortez

**Read:** Caroline Dodds Pennock, “Aztecs Abroad? Uncovering the Early Indigenous Atlantic”  
*American Historical Review*

**Reading Response Due**

Week 4

Jan 31 – Conquistadors

Read: Cabeza de Vaca, *Naufraogos* excerpts

<https://courses.lumenlearning.com/atd-pima-writing2/chapter/strand-c-reading-excerpts-from-alvar-nunez-cabeza-de-vaca/>

**Reading Response Due**

Feb 2 – The Columbian Exchange

**Recipe Assignment**

Week 5

Feb 7 – Silver from Potosí to Ming China

Read: Charles Mann, “Silk for Silver”

Feb 9 – The Challengers – English Pirates and New Plantations

Read: Charles Mann, “The Tobacco Coast”

Week 6

Feb 14 – Colonial New England

Read: Lepore, *In The Name of War*

**Reading Response Due**

Feb 16 – The Dutch West India Company

Week 7

Feb 21 – The French Atlantic

Feb 23 – No Class – Winter Break

Week 8

Feb 28 – Midterm Exam

Mar 2 – Religion, Magic, and Comparative Witch-Hunting in the Atlantic

Read: Andrew Redden, “The Problem of Witchcraft, Slavery Jesuits in Seventeenth-Century New Granada”

Week 9

Mar 7 – West Africa and the Middle Passage

Read: West Africa Primary Source Documents

Mar 9 – Cultural Resilience in the African Diaspora

Read: Charles Mann, “Forest of Fugitives”

Week 10

Mar 14 – Exploring the Slave Voyages Database (Bring laptop to class, if possible)

Mar 16 – *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano*

Read: Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano or Gustavus Vassa, The African: Written by Himself* (1789)

**Reading Response Due**

Week 11

Mar 21 – Read: James Sweet, *Domingos Álvares: African Healing, and the Intellectual History of the Atlantic World* (part 1)

Mar 23 – Read: James Sweet, *Domingos Álvares: African Healing, and the Intellectual History of the Atlantic World* (part 2)

## **Reading Response Due**

Week 12

Mar 28 – Pirates

Read: Markus Rediker, *Villans of All Nations* – Part 1

Mar 30 – Pirates

Read: Markus Rediker, *Villans of All Nations* – Part 2

Week 13

Apr 4 – No Class – Semana Santa

Apr 6 – No Class – Semana Santa

Week 14

Apr 11 – Slave Revolts and Abolition

Apr 13 – The Haitian Revolution

Week 15

Apr 18 – The Age of Revolution in an Atlantic Context

## **Research Essay Due**

Apr 20 – Research Presentations

Week 16

Apr 25 – Research Presentations

Apr 27 – Research Presentations

**Final Exam – Friday, May 5, 12pm**