

History 242

The Age of Exploration & Discovery

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Textbooks:

Pathfinders: A Global History of Exploration, Felipe Fernandez-Armesto

Travel Narratives from the Age of Discovery, Peter C. Mancall, Ed.

The Explorations of Captain James Cook in the Pacific, A. Grenfell Price, Ed.

Bartolome De Las Casas: A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies

Introduction:

From the Greeks to the Space Age an essential human drive has been to explore beyond the known world. Pushing the envelope of knowledge has driven this urge, but so has desire for land and economic gain. In this course we will examine all these motives, as well as other push-pull factors that contributed to exploration. So too will we examine the myriad of effects and implications – both long and short term – that exploration has had on societies around the world. Moreover, we will examine many of the great explorers and what drove them to persevere despite great odds and hardships.

We will start with the ancient world and move quickly through the Greek and Roman era, Islamic era, Viking era, and the Middle Ages, but the bulk of the course will concentrate on exploration between the 1400s and 1800s C.E., during which time virtually every corner of the globe became known to Europeans and their descendants, and during which time Europeans came to dominate the globe, changing the face of much of it – especially the “New World” – in the process. We will then finish with a brief assessment of exploration over the last century, as well as of space exploration.

Teaching methods:

This course is a distance-learning course involving video taped lectures, and the opportunity for online discussions organized around major themes. All students will be encouraged to raise questions at any time based upon their work with the texts and their appreciation of online discussion.

This course requires each student to undertake independent work. Methods for

this course resemble those which would be applied in the study of a foreign language. The study of history is cumulative. Since issues and events are presented as relational, it is fundamental to the success of a student to ensure that the reading assignments and other work will be accomplished in a timely fashion so that a current accumulation of relevant data as method of analysis and argument are introduced. The study of history at this level requires college literacy and hence the ability to communicate ideas and facts clearly and accurately.

Students are advised to make careful notes. All questions concerning televised lectures and text assignments are welcome at any time in the course of online discussion. It is important for students to gain a reasonable geographical sense of places under discussion. Also, it is crucial that each student develop a chronology of events that will serve as a scaffold upon which to build arguments and interpretations of data

Course requirements

Students will take four short timed quizzes. The quizzes are drawn from lectures and readings. A tutorial to help students prepare will be posted with each quiz. These quizzes cumulatively will represent 20% of the total course grade.

Additionally, students will be asked to write three short papers of no more than four pages in length. The three papers will be based on the Bartolome De Las Casas, Captain James Cook and the Travel Narratives books. The paper concerning the Travel Narrative book each student will select 3 documents to write about in a contrast and comparison paper. Each paper will be double-spaced, typed, and use a ten, eleven or twelve font. A writing guide will be provided for each writing assignment. Each of these papers will be worth 10% of the grade. Papers will be submitted as an attachment to an email in Vista.

There will be only a final exam for the course. The final exam will involve essay, short answer questions/identification. The essay will be worth a possible 60 points; short answer questions/identification will be worth 40 points.

Additionally, there will be discussion questions posted each Friday, and students are expected to post their answers for others to see and comment. Initial responses to a discussion question must be posted by the following Tuesday and then three additional posts to other students' posts will gain additional points. The initial post is worth up to 55 points and the three student responses will be worth 45 points for a total of 100 points. The lowest two discussion grades will be discarded before an average is taken. This participation will be worth 25% of the total grade.

Online discussions are meant to help students prepare for exams by discussing major themes and problems. Those students who do poorly on examinations or do not meet their own expectations are encouraged to discuss matters with the instructor as early as possible.

Note Concerning On-Line Courses:

About the rewards and demands of distance learning: Distance learning is appealing to students with good independent studying skills, and it is designed to provide greater site and time flexibility than a face-to-face, "bricks and mortar" class. Most students who have taken distance learning classes feel that distance learning requires **longer hours** than regular classroom style courses, but they appreciate being able to work at convenient times. Bear in mind that an online version of a course is NOT an easier or simpler course, just more flexible in terms of the learning schedule. In fact, an online class usually requires **as much if not more work than a regular classroom course**, and usually sets a fairly strict, steady pace.

General Learning Goals:**The primary learning outcomes of History 242 are to:**

- A. Recognize the attitudes and motivations of world societies that have made exploration a major cultural theme: Examples are: Phoenicians, Norsemen, Portuguese, Spanish/French/English/and Dutch in age of Reconnaissance, etc.
- B. Identify the major world figures who undertook these endeavors, such as Eric the Red, Leif Eriksson, Ibn Battuta, Marco Polo, Vasco da Gama, Columbus, Magellan, Sir Francis Drake, James Cook, von Humboldt, Lewis and Clark, etc., and describe what they did, how and why they did it, and state the significance of their activities.
- C. Describe the geopolitical global patterns that resulted from exploratory endeavors: i.e., conquest of the Americas, the 19th c. "Scramble for Africa," and race to the moon.
- D. Determine how Euro-American ascendancy developed after 1500 CE
- E. Develop an appreciation for the diversity of cultural values of the role played by non-western cultures in the process of exploration.
- F. Understand the general chronology and geography of world/exploration history
- G. Develop critical/analytical thinking.
- H. Develop an historical awareness of cultural development.

These outcomes will be accomplished by:

- A. Written exams
- B. Weekly Discussions
- C. Quizzes
- D. Discerning historical bias.
- E. Differentiating between fact and fiction, with special emphasis on the role of the fabulous, the mythical, and the marvelous in spurring on exploration.
- F. Comparing and contrasting data and recognizing fallacious reasoning.
- G. Identifying cause and effect in history, and developing inferential abilities.
- H. Developing critical judgments about historical developments.

Students will then be able to apply these skills in the following areas:

- A. Comprehend the process of history.
- B. Comprehend the multifaceted motivational factors involved in exploration.
- C. Gain knowledge of basic geopolitical entities.
- D. Gain knowledge of the shifts in geopolitical boundaries through time.

- E. Recognize the role that geophysical realities have played in shaping history.
- F. Develop an awareness of cultural clashes in different geographic contexts.
- G. Understand the role that human emotions/behaviors have played in history.
- H. Appreciate the role that cultural outlooks/attitudes have played during the age of exploration and discovery.

Examinations, quizzes, discussions, and papers are marked on a scale of 100 points. No curve grading will be used in the course.

Final Exam 25%
Writing Assignments (3) 30%
Quizzes 20%
Discussions 25%

Grades

The grading scheme is as follows:

A = 95-100%	C+ = 70-74%
A- = 90-94%	C = 65-69%
B+ = 85-89%	C- = 60-64%
B = 80-84%	D+ = 55-59%
B- = 75-79%	F = Below 50%

For due dates of all assignments, including exams, please ensure that you consult the course calendar on a daily basis. The final dates will be announced in the course.

Reading Assignments/ Video Lectures

Week 1: Pathfinder pp. 21-38, 50-59
Lectures # 1 & 2

Week 2: Pathfinder pp. 62-65, 71-86, 96-101, and 110-117
Lectures # 3 & 4

Week 3: Pathfinder pp. 126-38, 141-6, 156-61, and 174-82
Travel Narratives: Documents 1 & 7
Lectures # 5 & 6

Week 4: Pathfinder pp. 161-74, 182-86
Travel Narratives: Document 15
Lectures # 7 & 8

Week 5: Pathfinder pp. 193-200, 215-19, and 224-32
Travel Narratives: Documents 10, 16 & 17
Lectures # 9 & 10

Week 6: Pathfinder pp. 237-39, 248-53, and 220-222
Travel Narratives: Documents 18, 19 & 20
Lectures # 11 & 12

Week 7: Pathfinder pp. 263-266
Travel Narratives: Documents 14, 25 & 26
Lectures # 13 & 14

Week 8: Pathfinder pp. 254-60, 266-278
Travel Narratives: Documents 28 & 29
Lectures # 15 & 16

Week 9: Pathfinder pp. 289-92, 298-310, 319-27, and 370-377
Lectures # 17 & 18

Week 10: Pathfinder pp. 332-46, 351-6, 313-6, and 394-400
Lectures # 19 & 20

ATTN: The class syllabus is subject to change.