HIST 4003/CLAS 4003
Hurricanes and Revolutions
History of Ayti/Hispaniola/Dominican Republic & Haiti
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2:20 - 3:50 pm, Piskor Hall 19.

Professor: Juan Ponce-Vázquez
Office: 204 Piskor Hall
Phone: 315 229 5345
Office Hours: By appointment
Email: jponce@stlawu.edu

Course description

The history of Hispaniola, currently divided in the countries of Haiti and Dominican Republic, has remained pivotal to the development of the Caribbean and the Atlantic world. The two parts of the island evolved in unique ways, thus creating distinct but interconnected societies. In the east the plantation economy went into decline very early on, thus creating a remarkable rural society, the first in the Caribbean in which free people of African descent predominated; in the west, a brutal plantation regime ended in a spectacular slave revolt (The Haitian Revolution) that shook the foundations of the Atlantic world.

The objective of this course is to present the Dominican Republic and Haiti, as unique sites of colonial experimentation and anti-colonial struggle, as well as a site of complex sovereignty questions both in its pre-national and national period. We will look at both parts of the island together, marking the differences between both societies while highlighting those things that connect them, such as the development of plantation economies during the colonial period, the control of caudillos in their respective national politics and societies, the role of U.S. Imperialism, the rise and fall of dictatorial regimes, and the importance of the island’s diaspora.

Course objectives

By the end of this course, students are expected to:

1) Connect people, events, and ideas within larger themes of Hispaniola, the Caribbean, and the Atlantic World and compare and contrast the experiences of different groups of people with regard to race, ethnicity, class, gender, politics, and generation.

2) Develop critical thinking skills through engagement with scholarship and literature (also known as historiography) in Latin America by identifying the argument, the primary sources on which that argument is based, and by putting that work in context by relating it to other course material.

3) Analyze primary sources (documents, oral testimonies, or images from a particular time and place that a historian is examining) within their own historical contexts.
4) Develop critical thinking skills through engagement with scholarship and literature (also known as historiography) of the region by identifying the argument, the primary sources on which that argument is based, and by putting that work in context by relating it to other course material.

5) Gain a basic understanding of how historical change happens and how historians think and practice history.

6) Make clear, organized arguments (either in oral or written form) supported by historical evidence and analysis of that evidence.

**Required Readings (available at the University Bookstore)**


**Course requirements & evaluation**

*Participation* (20%) - Students are expected to engage in class discussion and express their views and analysis of the class materials. Sitting in class in silent while staring at your colleagues, looking out of the window, or taking abundant notes of what everyone says is NOT participation. Shyness is not an excuse. Discussion time is a good moment to bring up some of the thoughts you might have had while reading or watching the materials and to react to the views of your colleagues. You must take their ideas seriously and be able to respond to them. You must be able to disagree with your colleagues and to welcome the exchange of ideas that follows when someone disagrees with you. If you do not participate, you have not met your responsibility to yourself, to each other, or to the course.

3 *Critical Essays* (30%) - In the course of the semester, during the weeks marked below (see class schedule), students will hand in papers where they analyze and reflect on the readings or, movies assigned for that specific week (and no other). These papers are not intended to be a mere report of the content of the readings. They must include an original analysis and an interpretive point of the topic, and you should explain why that material was important, and support it with appropriate examples and materials. 3 pages each.

*Midterm* (15%) - It will consist of three excerpts from primary or secondary sources, which you need to contextualize and explain.
**Historiographical Essay** (20%) - Students will find three scholarly articles about Hispaniola in specialized journals and will write a 10 to 12-page paper in which they compare the authors’ conclusions, approach, methodology, and sources. The use of any other scholarly materials to illuminate the topic (used in class or from outside class) is expected and encouraged.

**Final Exam** (15%) - Similar to the midterm. It will be a take home exam.

---

**IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT ALL WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS**

All written assignments must be **printed, paginated, stapled, and handed in class** the date they are due. Unless you are bedridden, emailed copies are not welcome and you will be penalized. Papers without staples will also be penalized. Papers must be formatted in **Times New Roman 12, with 1 inch margins.** All references must be formatted using the Chicago Manual of Style footnote and bibliographic citation format (aka *Chicago 15th edition, notes and bibliography*). This is the format historians use. For more info, see Rampolla, p. 113-145, or the Web (or via VPN if you are off-campus) at: [http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html)

---

**Students must attend the screening of the documentary film *Fatal Assistance (2013)* on February 17 at 7:30pm (Hepburn 218). Please plan ahead.**

---

**Class Policies**

- **Attendance:** you must come to class. You are allowed **three absences** throughout the semester **for any reason, including illness.** One extra absence will subtract 0.25 from your final grade. I will take attendance every single class. If you are not in class when I call your name and show up later, it will be considered a late arrival. Three late arrivals will be considered an unjustified absence, and will count towards your total allotment. **If you accumulate 5 absences you will receive a maximum grade of 1.0 in the class. You will fail if you have 6 absences or more.**

  **Note for student athletes:** This absence policy also applies to you, regardless of your team’s schedule. Please come to talk to me (during office hours, not before/after class!) early in the semester about your schedule, and bring a full printed copy of your schedule to the meeting.

- If you miss class, please do not email me to ask me what you missed! It is your responsibility to find out through your colleagues, class schedule or any other means. If once you find out there are things you do not understand, then you are very welcome to come to office hours and I will help you in every way I can.

- Cell phone use is prohibited in class. Find out where the “power off” and “silence” buttons are, use them, and put the cell phone away. Whatever call or message is coming in during class can
wait until the end of class. Texting is not allowed, and neither is the use of any portable electronic devices.

- **Laptops are not allowed in class.**

- Take deadlines seriously. All major assignments and deadlines are laid out in the class schedule so you can plan around them. Being crunched by several deadlines at once is no excuse for late assignments. If you must miss class when an assignment is due, arrange to get it to me by the due date. Any late papers (including those left in my box without warning while the rest of us are in class) will lose 0.50 for each day the paper is late. **After three days, assignments will not be accepted.** As for exams, you must take them the day they are scheduled. If you miss class the day of an exam, you cannot take it later.

- Changes to course schedule: The instructor reserves the right to adjust the course schedule or readings to provide the best learning experience possible.

- **Note about return of graded assignments:** Grading takes time in the Humanities and Social Sciences. Grading written assignments well and offering thoughtful comments takes even a longer time. Returning graded assignments will always take at least two weeks, and more likely, close to three. Please factor this into your expectations when it comes to waiting for your exams and papers.

- **Policy on Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else’s ideas, words, or artistic, scientific, or technical work as one’s own creation. Using the ideas or work of another is permissible only when the original author is identified. Paraphrasing and summarizing, as well as direct quotations, require citations to the original source. Plagiarism may be intentional or unintentional. Lack of dishonest intent does not necessarily absolve a student of responsibility for plagiarism. It is the student’s responsibility to recognize the difference between statements that are common knowledge (which do not require documentation) and restatements of the ideas of others. Paraphrase, summary, and direct quotation are acceptable forms of restatement, as long as the source is cited. Students who are unsure how and when to provide documentation should read Rampolla, pp. 98-105, and are advised to consult with me. Offenders will be penalized to the full extent outlined by the university guidelines.

You can check your grades in Sakai anytime. They will be in a 100 point scale. Since the university’s grading scale is divided into .25 increments, I include the following chart to help you understand the correlation between the 100 point scale for class assignments and the 0.0-4.0 university scale.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Range</th>
<th>0.0</th>
<th>Grade Range</th>
<th>4.0</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>96-100</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>68-70</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>92-95</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>65-67</td>
<td>1.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>88-91</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>62-64</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, etc. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find the appropriate resources here:

- Title IX coordinator: Lisa Cania. (315) 229-5567. lcania@stlawu.edu
- Counseling Services, Sexual Assault Support Group: Tara Tent (315) 229-5392 ttent@stlawu.edu
- For crisis intervention, you can reach St. Lawrence University 24-hour Sexual Violence Hotline (315) 244-5466. If you prefer out of campus support, REACHOUT of St. Lawrence County: (315) 265-2422.
- Safety and Security (315-229-5555) and the police (911).

Class Schedule

WEEK 1: Introduction

January 15 Description of the course, and discussion of goals, themes, assignments, and class policies.

20 Introduction part 2.


DR Reader, ch. I, “The People Who Greeted Columbus”

WEEK 2: Indigenous Societies of Ayti, Europeans and early colonial Santo Domingo.


WEEK 3: The Rise of Santo Domingo and St. Domingue.


DR Reader, ch. II, “The Slave Problem in Santo Domingo”


CRITICAL ESSAY 1 DUE

WEEK 4: Slavery and Development in Hispaniola.


10 Haitian History, chapter 2 (by Carolyn Fick)


MID SEMESTER BREAK

WEEK 5: African Diaspora Politics, Culture and Identity.

17 Class Film: Divine Horsemen: The Living Gods of Haiti (2008, 52 minutes)


Hepburn 218 at 7:30pm Film screening: Fatal Assistance (2013. 100 minutes)


Haitian History, chapter 4 (by John K. Thornton)
CRITICAL ESSAY 2 DUE

WEEK 6: The Haitian Revolution, part 1

24 Readings: Haitian History, chapter 3 (by David Geggus)


WEEK 7: The Haitian Revolution, part 2.

March 3 Film (to watch on your own): Égalité For All (2008)


Haitian History, chapter 1 (by Michel Rolph Trouillot)

5 MIDTERM EXAM

WEEK 8: Revolution in the Atlantic.


Haitian History, chapters 5 (by Ashli White)

12 Haitian History, chapter 6 (by Ada Ferrer) and 9 (by Leslie M. Alexander)

SPRING BREAK!!

I would suggest that you read Edwidge Danticat, The Farming of Bones over the break. It’s not due until Week 12, but it is long, and there are other readings too, so please don’t leave it for the last minute!

WEEK 9: España Boba and “Unification”/”Occupation.”

DR Reader, ch. III, “After the War, Tertulias,” “Stupid Spain,” “Arrogant Bell Bottoms,” and “Dominicans Unite”.


Haitian History, chapter 7 (by Mimi Sheller)

CRITICAL ESSAY 3 DUE

WEEK 10: Caudillos, Empires, and Peasants.


Haitian History, chapter 8 (by David Nicholls).

April 2 DR Reader, Chapter IV, “Pedro Santana,” “The Caudillo of the South,” “In the Army Camp at Bermejo,” Spanish Recolonization: a Postmortem,” “A Lesson in Quite Good-Breeding,” “Your Friend, Ulises.”

DR Reader, Chapter V, “Public Enemies: The Revolutionary and the Pig,” “Barriers to Progress: Revolutions, Diseases, Holidays, and Cockfights”, “Patrons, Peasants and Tobacco.”

(IF YOU HAVEN’T ALREADY, START THINKING ABOUT YOUR HISTORIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY!)


7 Haitian History, chapter 10 (by Brenda Gayle Plummer)

DR Reader, chapter VI.


WEEK 12: The Trujillo Era: Totalitarianism and Modernity in the Caribbean.


16 DR Reader, Chapter VII
WEEK 13: Balaguer, and the Duvaliers.

21 Film (to watch on your own): *The Agronomist*. (2002)

*Haitian History*, chapter 12 (by Patrick Bellegarde-Smith)

23 DR Reader, chapter VIII

WEEK 14: Neoliberalism, and Contemporary Dominican and Haitian politics.


30 *Haitian History*, chapter 13 (by Paul Farmer)

DR Reader, Chapter X, “Tribulations of Dominican Racial Identity.”