

ANT3930/IDH3931

1491: THE WORLD COLUMBUS FOUND, AND HOW WE KNOW IT

Course Information

Fall 2022

T 10:40a - 11:30a Th 10:40p - 12:35p

T CSE E220 Th WEIM 1094

Instructor: Dr. Daniel Contreras

Office: B346 Turlington

Phone: (352)294-6880

email: daniel.contreras@ufl.edu

Office Hours: Wed 1-3p and by appt

Course Description

Few 500 year-old events figure as prominently in global history and modern politics as Columbus' arrival in the Americas in 1492. Whether Columbus himself is acclaimed as pioneering explorer or vilified as genocidal bigot, the effects of the Columbian Encounter are universally recognized as profound. Truly examining those effects, though, requires understanding the Western Hemisphere on the verge of Columbus' arrival. This course examines the scale and complexity of indigenous populations of the Americas on the eve of European contact, with attention not only to *what* we know but to *how* we know it. It pays particular attention to revolutionary research in the last few decades that has – thanks in part to new technologies like LiDAR and satellite remote sensing – revolutionized our understandings of the Americas before Columbus.

We will cover these issues in four parts:

Part I: Post-Apocalyptic Retrospective

Part II: The Challenge of Past Demography

Part III: From Empty Continent to Urbanism

Part IV: Anthropogenic Environments and Legacies

Each section will combine an overview with recent primary source readings to examine what we know about the pre-Columbian past and how, as well as how and why that knowledge has changed (and continues to change).

Course Objectives

In completing this course, students will develop:

- critical reading and research skills
- familiarity with the human history of the Americas from colonization to European arrival
- familiarity with methods for studying the human past
- critical perspective on ways of knowing the past

Course structure

This is a seminar course that will occasionally include lectures. The two class sessions each week will be broken into three segments. The first segment (Tues 10:40a – 11:30a) will follow a seminar format during which time a designated lead student will facilitate discussion of the previous week's readings. In the second segment (Th 10:40a – 11:30a), the instructor will present the material to be covered during the subsequent segment. During the third segment (Th 11:30a – 12:35p), students will lead discussion.

Participation

All students must participate in weekly discussions (**10%** of final grade). Participation includes attendance, active listening, and constructive contributions to discussion. We will also experiment with shared annotation of course readings; to the degree that we adopt this practice, your engagement with this discussion-in-the-margins will also constitute part of your participation in the course.

Facilitation

All students must facilitate a proportional share of the class discussions (number depending the total number of enrolled students; **15%** of final grade).

- The facilitator will be responsible for guiding the class in detailed discussion.
 - In the case of chapters from *1491*, the facilitator should highlight key themes and questions raised, including both points that are particularly surprising or compelling and points about which you are skeptical. Consider the endnotes and check sources!
 - In the case of primary source material, the facilitator should be prepared to outline what claims the paper makes about the past, and the methods that it uses to do so.

Written Responses

During the course of the semester you will be asked to submit four written responses to prompts about the reading. These should be thorough and thoughtful ~500 word pieces of writing that make reference to relevant course readings, but do not need to consist of polished prose. Prompts will be available on Canvas; responses are due *by the start of class* on the day noted.

Final Paper:

All students must complete a final paper. For this paper, you will select one chapter (or portion of a chapter) from *1491* to update. Examining both Mann's sources and subsequently published literature, you will – in ~2500 words – evaluate Mann's read of the evidence and suggest what has changed as a result of more recent research.

Course Requirements

- 10% Complete weekly readings and participate in class discussions
- 15% Seminar facilitation
- 10% Written responses
- 5% Paper Prospectus: A one-page proposal for your final paper. This should detail which section of *1491* you propose to update and why. Due **at the end of Week 6 (7 Oct)**.
- 5% Annotated Bibliography: A list of the sources that you plan to incorporate in your final paper, with brief (4 sentences max) descriptions of each and . Due **at the end of Week 10 (4 Nov)**.
- 20% Final Paper. Due **12 Dec**.
- 5% Final Presentation: A 10-15 minute presentation of your paper to the class. Presentations will be in class during the penultimate week of the semester, so that you may incorporate any feedback into the final version of your paper.

Office hours:

You are welcome in my office hours either individually or in groups. You are in no way required to come, but please note that this should be considered part of the education available to you, not a last resort.

Attendance Policy, Class Expectations, and Late Assignments

Attendance

This course is primarily a seminar; since attendance is fundamental to the learning goals, it is required. Of course, life may sometimes intervene, in which case you are expected to notify the instructor ahead of time or as soon as practical afterwards. More than two absences will already constitute >10% of the course, and you should consult with the instructor about appropriate make-up activity. Excused absences must be consistent with university policies in the [Undergraduate Catalog](#) and require appropriate documentation. Additional information can be found in [Attendance Policies](#).

Assignments

Assignments in this course comprise written responses, final paper milestones, and responsibility for facilitating seminar. Due dates for paper milestones are intended to motivate you to start those papers, and are based on the need to give you feedback with sufficient time for you to react to it. As such, they can be negotiable, as long as you ask in advance. If you are scheduled to facilitate a seminar and for any reason will not be able to, please both notify the instructor as far ahead of time as possible and attempt to find another student with whom you can swap dates.

Course Texts

There is one required text, which we will supplement with several articles and book excerpts (listed below and available on Canvas).

Mann, Charles C. (2006) *1491: New Revelations of the Americas Before Columbus*. New York: Vintage Books.

A note on reading Mann: One of the best things about this book is that Mann is transparent and explicit about his sources. Take advantage! Check his endnotes, and particularly if you're curious or skeptical, check his sources!

Course Schedule

Week	Theme	Dates	Readings
		25 Aug	Course Introduction
1	Post-Apocalyptic Retrospective	30 Aug	Mann, Ch.1 *Response #1 due*
		1 Sept	How do we know about the Pre-Columbian past? Covey 2020, Introduction Kelly 2016, Ch.2
2		6 Sept	Setting the Stage Wolf 1997[1982], Ch.2
		8 Sept	Why this isn't simply a question of empirical investigation. Denevan 1992 Denevan 2011 Wolf 1997[1982], Preface & Introduction
3		13 Sept	Narratives matter. Trouillot 1995, excerpt *Response #2 due*
		15 Sept	Ecological Indians? Hames 2007
4	The Challenge of Past Demography	20 Sept	Mann, Ch.2
		22 Sept	Oswald et al. 2020 *Response #3 due*
5		27 Sept	Mann, Ch.3
		29 Sept	Drennan et al. 2015, Ch.1-2 Riris 2018
6		4 Oct	Mann, Ch.4
		6 Oct	Lovell 1992 Koch et al. 2019
		7 Oct	Paper Prospectus due
7	From Empty Continent to Urbanism	11 Oct	Mann, Ch.5
		13 Oct	Kelly and Prasciunas 2007 Waters 2019 Halligan & Farr 2022
8		18 Oct	Mann, Ch.6
		20 Oct	Pearsall 2008 Clement et al. 2015
9		25 Oct	Mann, Ch.7
		27 Oct	Cowgill 2008 McGuire & Saitta 1997
10	A n t h r o p o l o g y	1 Nov	Mann, Ch.8

		3 Nov	Dussol et al. 2021
		21 Oct	Annotated Bibliography due
11		8 Nov	Mann, Ch.9
		10 Nov	Fisher 2022 Prümers et al. 2022 Bundell 2022
12		15 Nov	Mann, Ch.10
		17 Nov	Stegner's 'Wilderness Letter' Cronon 1996 *Response #4 due*
13		22 Nov	NATL visit
		24 Nov	NO CLASS - Thanksgiving
14	Paper presentations	29 Nov	
	Paper presentations	1 Dec	
15		6 Dec	Mann, Ch.11 & Afterword
		12 Dec	Final paper due

Readings

Clement, Charles R, William M Denevan, Michael J Heckenberger, André Braga Junqueira, Eduardo Góes Neves, Wenceslau G Teixeira, and William I Woods

2015 The domestication of Amazonia before European conquest. *Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences* 282: 20150813.

Covey, R Alan

2020 *Inca Apocalypse: The Spanish Conquest and the Transformation of the Andean World*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Cowgill, George L

2008 An update on Teotihuacan. *Antiquity* 82: 962–975.

Cronon, William

1996 The trouble with wilderness: or, getting back to the wrong nature. *Environmental History* 1: 7–28.

Denevan, William M

1992 The Pristine Myth: The Landscape of the Americas in 1492. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 82: 369–385.

2011 The “Pristine Myth” Revisited. *Geographical Review* 101: 576–591.

Drennan, Robert D, C. Adam Berrey, and Christian E. Peterson

2015 *Regional Settlement Demography in Archaeology*. Eliot Werner Publications, Clinton Corners, NY.

Dussol, Lydie, Michelle Elliott, Dominique Michelet, and Philippe Nondédéo

2021 Fuel economy, woodland management and adaptation strategies in a Classic Maya city: applying anthracology to urban settings in high biodiversity tropical forests. *Vegetation History and Archaeobotany* 30: 175–192.

Fisher, Christopher T

2022 Large-Scale Early Urban Settlements in Amazonia. *Nature*

Hames, Raymond

2007 The Ecologically Noble Savage Debate. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 36: 177–190.

Kelly, Robert L.

2016 *The Fifth Beginning: What Six Million Years of Human History Can Tell Us about Our Future*. University of California Press.

Kelly, Robert L., and Prasciunas, Mary M.

2007 Did the Ancestors of Native Americans Cause Animal Extinctions in Late-Pleistocene North America? And Does It Matter If They Did? In *Native Americans and the Environment: Perspectives on the Ecological Indian*, edited by Michael E. Harkin, and David Rich Lewis, pp. 95–122. University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln.

Koch, Alexander, Chris Brierley, Mark M Maslin, and Simon L Lewis

2019 Earth system impacts of the European arrival and Great Dying in the Americas after 1492. *Quaternary Science Reviews* 207: 13–36.

Lovell, W George

1992 “Heavy shadows and black night”: disease and depopulation in colonial Spanish America. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 82: 426–443.

McGuire, R H, and Dean J Saitta

1996 Although they have petty captains, they obey them badly: The dialectics of prehispanic western Pueblo social organization. *American Antiquity* 61: 197–216.

Oswald, W. Wyatt, David R. Foster, Bryan N. Shuman, Elizabeth S. Chilton, Dianna L. Doucette, and Deena L. Duranleau

2020 Conservation implications of limited Native American impacts in pre-contact New England. *Nature Sustainability*

Pearsall, Deborah M.

2008 Plant Domestication and the Shift to Agriculture in the Andes. *The Handbook of South American Archaeology* 105–120.

Prümers, Heiko, Carla Jaimes Betancourt, José Iriarte, Mark Robinson, and Martin Schaich

2022 Lidar reveals pre-Hispanic low-density urbanism in the Bolivian Amazon. *Nature* 606(7913):325–328. DOI: [10.1038/s41586-022-04780-4](https://doi.org/10.1038/s41586-022-04780-4).

Riris, Philip

2018 Dates as data revisited: A statistical examination of the Peruvian preceramic radiocarbon record. *Journal of Archaeological Science* 97: 67–76.

Trouillot, Michel-Rolph

2015 *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*. Beacon Press.

Waters, Michael R

2019 Late Pleistocene exploration and settlement of the Americas by modern humans. *Science* 365

Wolf, Eric R

1982 *Europe and the People Without History*. University of California Press, Berkeley.

University Policies

Grading

Grading scale:

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•	93-100%	A	•	80-83%	B-	•	67-70%	D+
•	90-93%	A-	•	77-80%	C+	•	63-67%	D
•	87-90%	B+	•	73-77%	C	•	60-63%	D-
•	83-87%	B	•	70-73%	C-	•	< 60%	E

Information on UF grading policy may be found at: [UF Graduate Catalog](#) and [Grades and Grading Policies](#).

Student Privacy

There are federal laws protecting your privacy with regards to grades earned in courses and on individual assignments. For more information, please see the [Notification to Students of FERPA Rights](#).

Students Requiring Accommodation

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center by visiting <https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/>. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

Course Evaluation

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing [online evaluations](#). Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students on the [Gator Evals page](#).

University Honesty Policy

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Honor Code (<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

Health and Wellness

U Matter, We Care:

If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu or 352 392-1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student.

Counseling and Wellness Center: counseling.ufl.edu/cwc, and 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS)

Student Health Care Center, 392-1161.

University Police Department at 392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies), or police.ufl.edu.

Academic Resources

E-learning technical support, 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to Learning-support@ufl.edu.

Career Resource Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601. Career assistance and counseling.

Library Support, Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Teaching Center, Broward Hall, 392-2010 or 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.

Writing Studio, 302 Tigert Hall, 846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.

Student Complaints Campus

On-Line Students Complaints

HB-7

The Florida State Legislature (in HB-7, currently being challenged in court), has expressed its concern about the risks of indoctrination in higher education. Students are encouraged to employ critical thinking and to rely on data and verifiable sources to interrogate all assigned readings and subject matter in this course as a way of determining whether they agree with their classmates and/or their instructor. No lesson is intended to espouse, promote, advance, inculcate, or compel a particular feeling, perception, viewpoint or belief.

HB-233

In accord with the recent dictates of the Florida State Legislature (HB-233, currently being challenged in court), students are allowed to record video and/or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for

which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture *does not* include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.